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FRIENDS
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Bibi

A LITTLE DANISH GIRL

YOUNG MODERNS BOOKSHELF

BIBI

A Little Danish Girl

By KARIN MICHAELIS

Translated by
LIDA SIBONI HANSON

Illustrated by
HEDVIG COLLIN *and* BIBI

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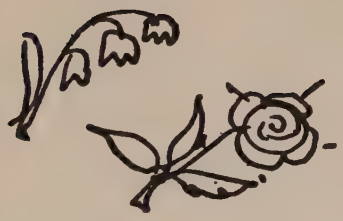

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Bibi

A LITTLE DANISH GIRL

Skagen
Og og Skinker
Randers
Smør
Himmel Bjerget.
Kronborg
Esbjerg
København
Fanø
Ribe
Odense
Dyrehaven
Kongen
Tønder
Dybbøl
Sønderborg
Romø
DANMARK.

INTRODUCTION

which you simply *must* read.

You may not think it possible but I believe that most Danish children could draw a pretty good map of Denmark, even with their eyes closed, or in the middle of the night. But as I especially wish you to read this book if you never have had even the tips of your toes inside of Denmark, of course I cannot expect you to know more about Denmark than, for instance, Danish children know about America. So I shall have to tell a bit about the geography of Denmark. However, as I am not exactly an expert in that matter, it will not be hard to follow me.

If you should take a globe with all the continents and seas, poles, tropics, longitudes, and latitudes, and whirl it round, you would have to have very good eyes to be able to put your finger on Denmark, even if you had an idea about where to look for it. Denmark is so very small—on the *map*. While China

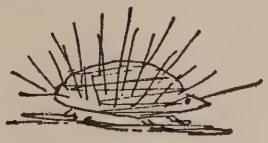
and America look like two coffee blotches on a tablecloth, Denmark is really hardly bigger than a flyspeck—that is, still speaking of the map. For if you *live* in Denmark, it is, to say the least, the very biggest country in the world. We Danes, for instance, consider our Himmelbjerget,[1] which really is but the size of an ordinary skyscraper, higher than either the Alps or Mount Everest—you know, the mountain over in India that people try to climb every year, although, so far, nobody has quite succeeded.

[1]That means "Sky Mountain."

But you are coming to Denmark.

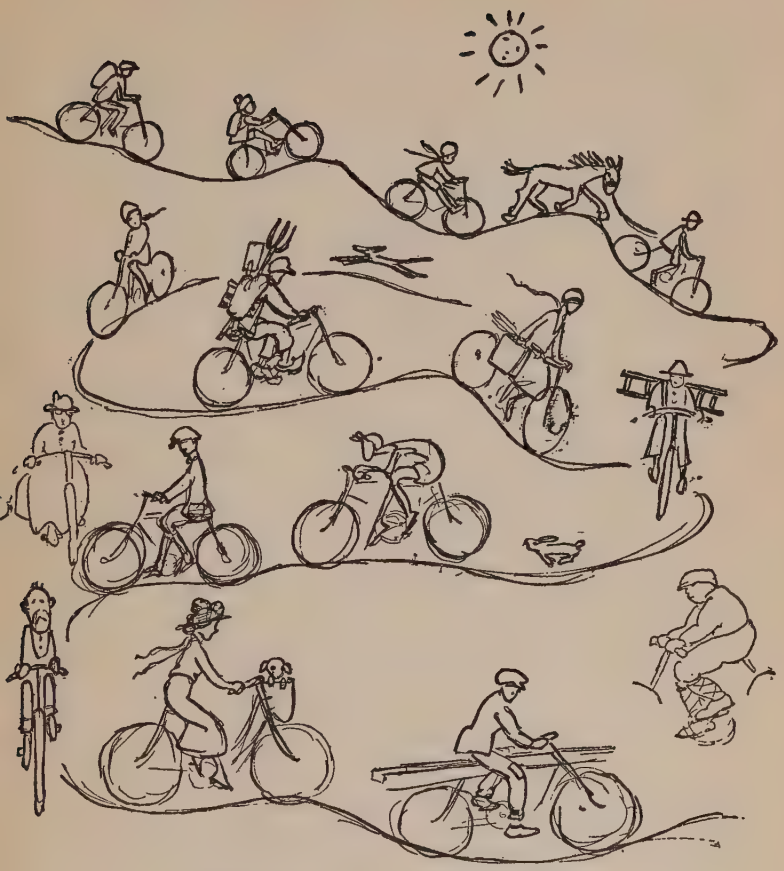
As a starting point, I suggest that you board a ship just off New York, and sail straight out into the ocean, due east, or rather a trifle to the north, or else you will land in Spain. If you do not steer carefully, you will have a collision with England, which lies in this direction; but once this danger is passed, you cannot help bumping right into Jutland, and Jutland is the largest and most important part of Denmark (for both Bibi and I were born there!).

Some people have the silly idea that Denmark is as flat as a pancake. Either those people have never seen a pancake, or they have never seen Denmark. For I'm sure that there doesn't exist a more bumpy country. Denmark is as covered with bumps as I can imagine a prize fighter is after a bout. And even if Himmelbjerget is not so very high, and we have no eternal snow on the top of it or on the roofs of our houses, we are at least as full of bumps and hills and knolls as a porcupine is of quills.



Everyone in Denmark rides a bicycle. That is, everyone who is not lying in a cradle, or riding in a baby carriage or in a wheel chair. All the others, from ordinary little children to people who are almost mossgrown with age, have bicycles. The schoolchildren go to school, the butchers' boys deliver the meat, the milkboys bring the milk, the seamstresses go to their customers, the salesladies to their stores, the men to their offices, the policemen to their beats, the ministers to their churches, all on bicycles —even the King cycles from and to his palace. And in the country the peasant rides his bicycle out into the field, and the milkmaid rides hers to the cows. The Lord himself made the country just right for bicycles with coaster brakes. As soon as you are seated on your wheel, it rolls down a little hill without your touching the pedals, and then it goes up the next little hill all by itself, and then down again. You can ride that way for a long time. Can that be called a flat country?

There are almost half as many people in Denmark as in New York City. You think that is not many? Then just try to count to two or three million, and see how tired your tongue will get halfway. But don't make the mistake of thinking that half of New York



EVERYONE IN DENMARK RIDES

City could hold all the houses of Denmark. No, indeed; we live in style, and take up more room than that. We live in nice houses that keep to the ground. We do not try to rake the stars down from the sky with the roofs of our houses, and we do not like to live in layers or in cells, like the bees in their hives. We are quite proud of being Danes, so, of course, we need more space than just everyday Only-Americans.

Then there are about as many pigs in Denmark as there are people. But that does not mean that there is a pig in every home, with the man and his wife. The pigs live by themselves, and the people by themselves. The pigs have their smell, and the people have theirs.

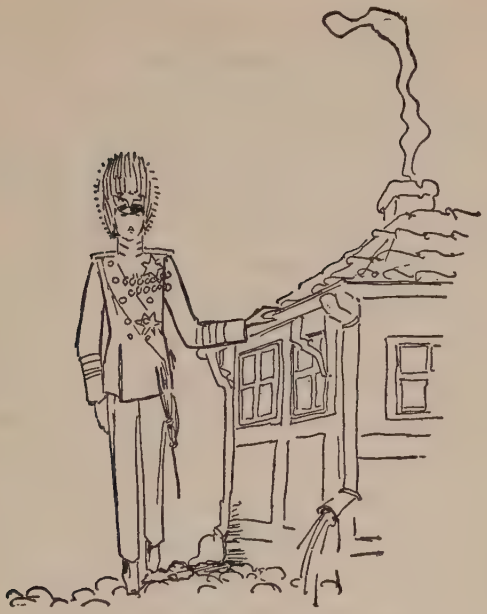
In America people take baths every day, but in Denmark one is really not so dirty that that is necessary. Some people bathe every day, but they are the rich ones who have their own bathrooms; others bathe once a week, and there are some that only bathe once a year, at Christmas; and when it comes right down to it, they are not so terribly dirty after all.

Denmark has a king and a queen, and a whole lot of princes and princesses. Unfortunately, they look quite like ordinary people, so that they might easily be mistaken for them. Our princes and prin-

cesses generally marry kings and queens from other countries. That is the cheapest and easiest way to get a kingdom and learn a foreign language, which always is a good thing. Our king has a real gold crown and also an ermine cloak, as in the fairy tales, but it is laid down with camphor, to protect it against the moths, and he uses it only on state occasions. Ordinarily, he wears a hat and a coat like anybody else; but as he is longer than all the others, of course his trousers and his cane must be longer too. It is nice for a king to be so tall. He can look over everybody's head and see what is happening beyond, and it is very desirable for a king to know everything.

There are many houses in Denmark so low that the King can lay his cane in the eaves trough when he passes (my grandfather was born in such a house, which is still standing and has not grown any, although my grandfather was born in 1801).

The King lives in a palace called Amalienborg. It is neither of gold nor of crystal, nor even of marble. Still, it is so nice and pretty that people from all over the world stop and take off their hats when they see it, or say "Oh!" just as you do when you see beautiful fireworks or a big airship.



Denmark is the most beautiful country in the world, says the Dane, and he ought to know, since he lives there. And the Danes speak as many different kinds of Danish as there are different languages all over Europe. I suppose you know that Europe is not like the United States, where one speaks only one language. No, in Europe people speak German and French and Spanish and Dutch and Russian and

twenty or thirty other languages besides. In Denmark one speaks only Danish, but Danish in so many different ways that it sounds like a lot of different languages. That is because of the shape of the country. Do not make the mistake of thinking that Denmark is a round or oval or square piece of ground wedged in between many other countries, like Germany or Russia or Switzerland. One might imagine that our Lord, when he was going to create Denmark and was holding the clod of earth in his hand, dropped it, so that it fell down and went all to pieces. Each piece became an island, except Jutland, which connects with Germany and is called a peninsula. From the top of Jutland one can walk right down to Rome, which is in the middle of Italy; but one does not do it often, as it is rather far.

Many of the islands are so small that one might be afraid for them when the storm takes hold and shakes them; but as far as I know it has never happened that one of them has flown away, or rather that the storm has blown it away. It has happened, however, that the sea has risen, and washed away houses, trees, cows, and men. West of Jutland there were some poor little islands that never thought of

hurting a cat, and lo and behold! One fine morning they had disappeared completely. In their place the sea is roaring away now, as if nothing at all had happened. I must say that the sea is rather tricky sometimes.

You know, of course, what a river is? There are enough of them everywhere. In Denmark, they are called *fiords*, which is the same thing, only a little different. A fiord is a short crack in the edge of the land, and the crack is filled with water. On its shores there are wide green meadows where cows and storks graze all summer. Blue and yellow flowers grow there, and often reeds. When the sea is in a bad mood—and the sea is the most fickle thing in the world—it fumes and fusses and chases the waves into the fiords, which are already so brimful of water that there is no room for any more. Well, what does the water do then? What else can it do but behave like a kettle which is too full? It runs over. This does not hurt the meadows any, for the blue and yellow flowers are all the better for a ducking; and the cows can run away, and the storks fly up in the air. But often there is a town near the fiord, and then it is no fun. With the storm scolding and thundering at its heels, the

water has no time to get its bearings, but just races and runs, as you would yourself, if you were chased by a big dog. So the water runs plumb into the town. Just try to imagine that the Hudson River could come racing up through Fifth Avenue one fine day: "Hello, here I am!" You cannot imagine that, can you? But in the town where Bibi belongs (and this book will tell you about Bibi) that is a common event, and it is called "High Water."

Perhaps it comes on the morning of a horse fair, so that all the streets are full of horses standing in two packed rows, with their tails toward the sidewalk. In the middle of the street there is just room enough for the horse dealers to go up and down, cracking their whips, and praising their horses. Well, the water from the fiord comes rushing into the streets. Then the horses have to be pulled up a little higher, for, fortunately, the town is on the slope of a hill—you know, Denmark is not at all as flat as a pancake! But the houses have to stay, you cannot put ropes around their necks and pull *them* up a hill. And in Danish houses you live not only on the first and second floors and perhaps in the attic, but also in the basement. That is not stylish, but cheap. Stone

steps lead down to the basement from the street, and people who have not much money live down there.

You can keep the rain out by closing your windows, but no closing of windows or doors will keep the water from the fiord out. First it rushes down the stone steps, then it pushes in under the door, and at once it covers all the floors. The furniture begins to sail around. That sounds funny; but it is no fun for the baker when bread and cakes sail around in one basement, nor for the shoemaker when shoes or boots sail around in another basement, nor for the

grocer when flour and farina and prunes swim around in a third. You may be sure they don't laugh. Then the thing is to get everything up on boxes and chests in a jiffy, or take it to one of the upper stories of the house—if there is time! For once the water is at full speed, you will be caught like a mouse in a trap.

What do you think the streets look like after the water has entered? All of a sudden, you see neither cobblestones nor sidewalks, and the town looks exactly like Venice (Venice is in Italy and has canals instead of streets, so that you sail around instead of taking the street car). Men wade about in boots that go 'way up to their waists, and often the water goes still higher. The men pick up children and old ladies and carry them across the street. When it is quite bad, the boats are set afloat, and then you really sail around in the streets. That is fun! Of course, the children of the town wish by themselves that it could be High Water every single day, but they do not say so; for they know that the grown-ups are very sorry. High Water is a costly event. Sometimes, a whole big house caves in when the water has undermined its foundation, and a lot of furniture and other things are ruined every time.

If the High Water comes on a Saturday, when the peasants from far and near are in town to buy fine,

bright-colored clothes, and to sell chickens, and eggs, and butter which their wives have churned by hand, it certainly is bad. The women are in town, dressed up in all their finery. They are wearing seven different skirts, one over the other, so as to take up a lot of room. One skirt is red and the next is green, one is brown and one is sky-blue, one is checked and one is

striped and one is flowered. They wear big, bright-colored silk kerchiefs round their heads, so that you cannot see a single hair; for it is not well bred to show that you have hair. They wear fringed three-cornered shawls about their shoulders, and network mitts which end at their fingers, so that the broad black rims on their nails show very plainly. They are very, very stylish, and they want to be still more so. They have much money in their purses, and are anxious to begin their shopping. And now they have to sit and kill time in a back room behind the general store, and drink coffee all day long. And then it is not even certain that the water will fall enough to let them get out of town and across the bridge before evening. Of course, there are also peasants from north of the town, and they can get home easily; but those from south of the town have to cross the fiord on South Bridge, and for them it is certainly no joke to sit there and drink one cup of coffee after another, and wait for the water to fall, so that the horses won't drown when wading through.

Such is Bibi's town. But Denmark has many towns, and they are just as different as, for instance, a bull-dog and a greyhound, or Fifth Avenue and the

Bowery. That is why people speak so many different kinds of Danish. In Jutland, they talk as if they had their mouths full of hot potatoes and were afraid of swallowing them. On Funen, which is a big round island with many fine country estates (listen well to this, for Funen is of great importance in this book), one sings out the words as if one had a whole little hand-organ inside of one's head. On another island, Lolland, people talk through their noses, as if they ought to have their tonsils taken out; and on Bornholm—well, on Bornholm they talk in a way that nobody in the whole world but a native can understand. Speaking of Bornholm, I want you to know that the people there are by far the thriftiest of all the Danes, and they will stand for no back talk; so there must never be more of them on board a ship than the ship has masts to which the captain can tie them if they should become obstreperous and make trouble. Bornholm is the only place in Denmark where there are rocks, which makes us as proud of Bornholm as America is of Yellowstone Park.

As I was saying, the Bornholmers are thrifty; but elsewhere in Denmark also you find thrifty people. Thus, I used to know a man and his wife who lived

on my little island and were so saving that they never had a fire in their stove; but in winter they went out in the barn and huddled up to the cow, one on each side, and kept warm that way. And the wife made her shirts of sacking, to save the washing, as one could not see when they were dirty. People also said that the man was so saving that he closed only one eye at night, so as not to wear out both eyelids at the same time; but I am not quite sure that that is true.

If I go on rambling in this way about Denmark and the Danes I shall have no room left for Bibi, who is to be the heroine of the whole story.

But I have to tell you where I live, so that you can visit me if you come to Denmark next summer. I live on a small green island called Thurö.[1] It is shaped just like a pair of spectacles without bows, that is, like two eyes with a narrow bridge across the nose. You cannot possibly go wrong, for no other island in Denmark looks like it, and it is, of course, the most beautiful of all the islands, because *I* live there. My house lies in a garden which goes 'way down to the water, and when I dig or weed my garden I can find as many arrowheads, scrapers, stone wedges, and

[1]Pronounce Toorö (German ö).

flint axes as you can find ants in an anthill. For there were people on my island during the Stone Age. Do you know what that is? If not, just pretend you do. The Stone Age people lived many thousand years ago, and from that time on until I planted my garden, nobody has lived in that spot; only cows and horses have been grazing there. The earth there is so full of relics that one might fill a whole museum with them. If you come and visit me, you may pick them up for your friends and brothers, and also for the museums in America, which would be perfectly delighted to get such very old things.

Nowadays, there are many people living on Thurö, and they are so neat and clean that they have a whole house standing only for show. You don't believe it? Listen: On Thurö you build a house with a living room, dining room, bedroom, and kitchen. All the rooms are furnished with nice, good furniture; the beds are covered with brand-new blankets; the floors are varnished; the copper things in the kitchen are polished, and the stove is rubbed until it shines like silver. Then the whole outfit is locked up. But the people who built this house also built a sort of small seedling of a house next to it, connected with it by a

narrow passage. This very small house is also very clean, and that is where the people live and eat and sleep, so as not to wear out the fine rooms in the real house. Perhaps people on Thurö used to think that they could take their big houses along to heaven when they died, and perhaps that is why they still take such good care of them. I do not know about that, but, then, that is not very important either.

People on Thurö are quite different from others. When one family buys a piano, the whole island does likewise; when one person buys a silk dress, they all do; when one buys a bicycle, everybody else has to have one. The whole island is covered with fruit trees, and in spring, when the cherry trees and apple trees are in blossom, it looks like a field covered with

snow. Yet, about a hundred years ago, there was not a single fruit tree on the whole island. At that time the inhabitants were not free, but belonged with the ground to a big squire who lived on another island. He got to thinking that they ought to be free instead of slaves, so he freed them. But he required them to plant fruit trees. They refused. He got angry. No use. He threatened to whip them if they had not planted the fruit trees within a week. He even sent them the fruit trees. When he came back the next week they had planted the trees, because, of course, they were afraid of the whip. But you can't imagine how the trees were planted! Upside down! Well, that squire went on a rampage. He told them if they did not get those fruit trees turned right side up he would sell the whole island with everybody on it to a cruel squire over on Funen. That helped. The people went to work and planted the trees the right way; and that has been done ever since, so that now the island looks like a beautiful orchard.

On a Sunday in spring, when the apple trees are in blossom and Dannebrog waves over every house on the island, I am sure that Thurö is the most beautiful spot in the whole world. Do you know

Dannebrog? I think it is the loveliest flag in the world. It is red with a white cross. But the remarkable thing about it is that it was not made by human hands but fell straight down from heaven. What do you think of that? Once upon a time, Denmark was having a fight with another country, and it began to look as if Denmark would get the worst of it. But suddenly Dannebrog fell down from heaven, and that certainly made the Danes pluck up their courage. They spat in their fists and went at it again, and the other country was chased away with its tail between its legs before you could say Jack Robinson. Denmark had won the war.

Now you will not forget what Dannebrog looks like, will you?

CHAPTER I

THE MAP OF DENMARK

BIBI,[1] about whom this book is written, was a little girl with long legs and blue eyes and yellow hair. That is all you need know about her for the present. Although, perhaps, I had better tell you right away that her father was a station master, and that the girl who cooked and swept and washed their dishes for them was called Jensine, and that they all lived above the station house.

One Saturday, Bibi was standing before the frosty window, drawing a map of Denmark on it with a darning needle. First, there was Jutland, craning and stretching its neck so as possibly to reach up to Norway; but the North Sea comes from one side and the Kattegat from the other, and those two seas come to loggerheads about which can hurl more water over the other. The North Sea is the stronger. Once it took a big bite out of Jutland, like a big deep hole; that

[1]Pronounce Beebie.

DRAWING A MAP OF DENMARK

hole is called the Bay of Misery—that is a sad name—and ever so many ships have run aground there or have been wrecked or smashed against the shore. In former days, people who lived near the Bay of Misery earned their living by taking everything they found in the wrecked ships.

Bibi wanted some day to go over to the North Sea and look at the three shoals on which so many ships had been wrecked. She also wanted to pick up amber enough on the shore for a string of beads. In olden times, there had been so much amber that it had been used even for dishes. Bibi's mother, who was born a countess—now she was dead—had had a jewelry box of amber, made like a castle with towers and halls. But that amber had been found on the coast of Pomerania in Germany, where the Wendish pirates used to live. Bibi wished there were Wendish pirates now.

The side of Jutland which on Bibi's map was toward the dining room and above the third-class waiting room, was fertile; that means that there were forests and fields and meadows and cows and sheep. But the west coast, which lay toward Daddy's room, above the telegraph office, was only sand. You could

feel it between your teeth just by thinking of it all; or if you imagined going barefoot there, your toes would tickle. Bibi thought it ought to have been enough for the Lord to make the real Sahara Desert, where the camels have to live on the water they have in their stomachs, and that he might have placed nice trees on the west coast of Jutland; but perhaps he had just a tiny bit of desert left and placed it in Jutland, so as to get rid of it.

In the middle of Jutland was the Heath. Flaming red with heather and sky-blue with butterflies. And heather honey was the very best kind. Bibi knew an old man out in the country who had twelve beehives, and he could go up to them without covering his head; the bees never stung him, for, of course, they knew him; but a stranger would be stung right away, and would swell up at once and nearly die; it was almost as bad as being bitten by a viper. We have only one kind of viper in Denmark, so that is nothing to brag about. If you are bitten by a viper you must suck the poison out at once or you will die.

Where the heath lies now there used to be vast forests with splendid gangs of robbers. That was probably about a thousand years ago, when the Danes

were living on oysters; for they had nothing else to live on. It was in the Stone Age, which is very famous. But one winter it was so terribly cold that the peasants froze their noses, so they felled the forests and burned them in their stoves; and when the forests all disappeared, the sand began to fly. It flew like a snowstorm; this is called sand drift. The sand drift buried all the men and animals and houses and cities, just as the ashes from Mount Vesuvius (in Italy) buried all those who were eating their dinners in the city of Pompeii; there you find them still sitting at table when you dig them out; but if you touch them, they disintegrate and are nothing but a heap of ashes. If one cleared away the heath perhaps one would find a whole city like Pompeii, with lots of people. Wouldn't that be great! Some day Bibi was going to try digging in the heath. But then the heather began to grow—do you know heather? Its Latin name is *Erica*—and then the sand could not fly any more—just as you tie your hair to keep it from flying about, the heather held down the sand. It was certainly lucky that the heather came, or all Denmark would have been only a pile of quicksand.

In Jutland were also all these dolmens in which

the people of the Stone Age were buried; and there were the kitchen middens from the time when one knew neither glass nor dishes nor printing presses nor America, but everything was of stone. It was grand with all those dolmens and kitchen middens, for they showed that Denmark was an old and noble country, much more so than Egypt, which was so conceited about those poor, miserable pyramids; why, anybody could build them, if he only had enough stones and slaves, and a mummy to put inside, as you put an almond into the rice porridge on Christmas Eve.

Bibi warmed the darning needle in her mouth and drew the fiords into the land. The Lymfiord went all through and split Jutland in two. Bibi shifted her tongue, and drew the long, narrow Gudenaa,[1] where the finest salmon in the world lived, and where she sailed her own boat every day. Then she put in dots for towns, and crosses for those towns in which she had been, and there were many of those; for if you are the daughter of a station master you have a pass on all the Danish railroads and can travel from morning till night if you like. Now came the railroads.

[1]Pronounce Goothenow.

Bibi knew them by heart; but before she had put them all in, the whole map was such a mess that nobody could see what was a fiord and what was a railroad. Bibi got furious with Jutland, and wiped it out with her bare arm. On the next pane she began *Zealand*. *Zealand* looked like a potato, and was very uninteresting; but there was Copenhagen with the King. Then came the other islands, looking like drops dripping from a candle when there is a draft. But pshaw! Who cared? Only Jutland mattered. For that was where Bibi lived; and Jutland connected so nicely with Schleswig and Europe.

Shucks! She had almost forgotten the Faroe Islands, and Iceland, and Greenland, and the West Indian Island. She did not care a bit for Greenland, but it had to be drawn, since it belonged; for think of all that snow and ice and never any country fair or harvest dance or railroads; nothing but whales and Eskimos; and one had to wash in lard, and drink cod-liver oil instead of milk, and live in tents made of hides. Whew! Then Iceland was better; it had *Geysir*, which was a hot spring. If only one had that here in Denmark one would not have to make a fire all the time, but would have hot water for ever and ever.

And from Iceland came also Leif the Lucky, who discovered America long before America was discovered. Columbus wasn't so much! So America really belonged to Denmark! Hurrah! How big we grew all of a sudden!

Bibi counted on her fingers all that really belonged to Denmark. First Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, which Queen Margaret gathered in one hand;[1] and yet the Swedish king had called her "King Trouserless," to scoff at her. Well, then America, and England, which we owned when we were Normans, and some of Germany, and a bit of France which is called Normandy, and Trankebar, which she thought was somewhere near Indo-China where the Bengal tigers and Bengal lights came from. And then the West Indian islands, St. Thomas, St. John, and Santa Cruz, where one got sugar and rum and Negroes; and then Iceland and Greenland. Hurrah! Hurrah!

Bibi stuck her right foot straight out in the air, took hold of her big toe with her right hand, and danced round. Hurrah! Hurrah! We really came within a hair of owning the whole world.

And besides, we made butter and eggs and ham

[1]Margaret united Denmark, Sweden, and Norway in 1397.

and kings and queens for all other countries. No matter how handsome and smart they were in other places and how many bags they had full of diamonds as big as goose eggs, only the princes and princesses made in Denmark were good articles of export; and export is an important source of income for a country, according to the geography. Bibi would like to be an export princess herself, so as to be allowed to

do whatever she pleased, and be stuck up, and stay away from that stupid school, and travel all over the world day after day until she had seen all there was to be seen. She knew exactly how she would do it: First, she would ride on a white stallion to all the places not on a railroad—although perhaps it would be better to take a camel or an ostrich for the desert. The stallion was to be just like Sleipner, which Odin and Thor owned in Valhalla when they were gods before Christianity was introduced. Sleipner

had eight legs, four on the right side and four on the wrong side, so that you just turned him round when he was tired on one side. He was said to be terribly clever at jumping rivers and precipices and swimming across the sea—although on the sea it would be nicer to have a ship with a sail of red silk; or an Indian canoe, which was only a hollowed tree trunk.

One surely could not fire a princess out of one school, and threaten to fire her out of the next one, too.

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And what had she done? Not the least thing. Not even killed anybody, but only felt bored and played hookey once in a while. That was because she was like those people in the Bible who were called nomads, and who always moved their tents to another place when they knew the old one by heart. Some of them were still living up in Lapland. But in Denmark the police called them vagabonds, and arrested them. Unfortunately, Daddy was neither a nomad nor a vagabond, but only a station master and a widower. His only care was to have the trains leave on the minute without any delay, and to put flowers on the Grave, and, of course, he also cared for Bibi. I should say he did! Whenever she did not

return quite as early as she had promised, he got so worried that he could neither eat nor sleep, said Jensine—and once he had the town drummer go around and call out that she had disappeared. Each

time, she would promise never to do it any more. But, all of a sudden something would buzz inside of her, as if she had a bee in her stomach. She could just see the train standing there, puffing and panting to get off; and if she looked up in the air she just saw the clouds racing along to see something new. The birds had wings—that was all very fine for them; if only one were a bird!

Bibi looked quite surprised; without knowing a thing about it, she had drawn a long train with its steam up. And 'way over to one side there was a castle. It was on Funen—the island that looked like a rather small potato. That was her castle. Almost. Just about. Nearly. She licked her finger and put it right in the middle of the castle. That served it right!

The signal bell rang. That meant that the train from the south had left Langaa, and was coming up in a little while. Would it do to ask Daddy if she might go along? It was Sunday to-morrow, so there was no school. She might sneak into one of the cattle cars and hide there. Only as far as Rold Forest, the one that had been full of robbers who stretched cords across the road to trip the travelers, in the days when Jensine's great-grandmother was a child. Or only as

far as—only as far as Hobro—only one single station . . .

Bibi felt it in her toes and in her hair that in a little while she would be off, even if she stamped her foot and said to herself, "You bad girl! You just stay where you are!" She knew it. It was as if she suddenly had wheels under her, and a locomotive whistle inside of her head. If she did not hurry, the train would leave, and then she would die. Absolutely. *Die!* She tried to think where her father was. In the kitchen, Jensine was doing her Saturday scrubbing. It would not do to disturb the office. Perhaps Daddy had gone to the Grave . . . the wheels under her could not stand still. She wrote on an enormous sheet of paper, with the biggest letters which she could manage, so that he would be sure to see it:

Dearest Daddy:

I have only gone to Hobro, for there is something I want to do there, but perhaps I will come home with the night train or else to-morrow morning. If you had been at home I would have asked you. Pleese do not be sorry. Your own Bibi.

CHAPTER II

TRADING NAMES

EVERYBODY begins life being born, even a little sparrow. To be born is a very important event, but to be christened is still more important. One is born with arms, legs, a nose, a mouth, and

eyes; but what is the use of it all, as long as one has no name? Without a name one might just as well not be born at all—or be born as a sparrow or a fly, for neither sparrows nor flies have names, as far as I know.

You get your name when you are christened. The dress which you wear for the occasion is so long that it would trail on the floor if you walked; but you are not yet able to walk, so you are carried, and the long dress makes you look a foot longer than you are. All the uncles and aunts who are allowed to go along to church and help carry you present you with spoons and cups and napkin rings, all of silver. But your name is chosen by your parents. They choose the name they like best: but perhaps you, who have to drag it along, think it terribly homely. No use for you to cry and kick in church; people will believe you do it only because the minister sprinkles water on your head. You are too little to cry, "Stop! Stop! Give me another name!" You have to get along with your horrid name until you lie in your coffin, and sometimes still longer; for generally they put a tombstone over you, with your name carved on it.

Bibi had been given two very nice names: Ulrikke

Elisabeth. That sounds nice enough, but it is a rather big mouthful. If names are too long for one mouthful, they are cut in two, like a potato. That was done with Bibi's name, and she was called Ulla. Ulla is all right for those who like it; but Bibi did not. I am going to tell you how she managed to get rid of that name and get another.

She had a gold ring formed like a snake, with a ruby for an eye; she also had a rowboat called *Lottie*,

and a friend called Bibi. After school, Ulla and the gold ring and Bibi used to row up the creek in *Lottie*. Ulla and Bibi had drunk brotherhood. You do not know what that is? I thought as much. Have you heard about the old Vikings? They used to scratch their arms with a spear and drink of each other's blood. That was called to drink brotherhood. Ulla and Bibi had only pricked one of their fingertips with a needle, and each had sucked a drop of blood from the other's finger. Then they were sworn brethren,

and if one were killed, the other would have to take revenge.

One day, when they were rowing up the creek between reeds and green meadows, and storks standing on one leg, and forget-me-nots and windmills on the meadows, Ulla said:

"Black hair does not go with the name of Bibi."

"Why not?"

"Bibi is a light-haired name; shall we trade names?"

"Trade—names? I do not think Daddy and Mother would let me. Do you remember when we swapped dresses and Mother scolded me because there were big spots on yours and the armholes were too tight?"

"Piffle; there are no spots on my name. Shall we swap?"

"But all my books are marked Bibi!"

"Well, then, we can also swap books!"

"But yours are so shabby!"

"Then I will give you something to boot."

"What?"

"My skipping rope?"

"I have two myself."

"How about my big doll?"

"Its head is cracked and it has only one leg."

"What about my silver thimble?"

"No, that is quite dented and out of shape, since you stepped on it."

"Well, what else? I will give you whatever you want if you will swap names, but it has to be right away."

"Will you give me your snake ring?"

Ulla gasped: "My sn——"

"I won't do it for anything else!"

Ulla rowed as hard as she could. "I might throw you into the water and let you drown; then I wouldn't have to give anything for your name!"

"Well, but then they would cut off your head!"

"Oh, perhaps—well, take the ring, then. But want to borrow it once in a while."

"How often?"

"Once a—week."

"No, I should say not! Not oftener than once a month."

"All right; then let us swap right away!"

"The ring is real gold, I suppose?"

Ulla made a face. "Do you think *I* would wear anything that was only imitation?"

"Why, the gold chain you drew in the grab bag was only imitation!"

"Oh, is that so?"

"Yes, for you don't get a real gold chain for ten *oere*. I know that."

"Well, the snake ring is real gold, for it used to belong to my mother, and she was a real countess!"

"Couldn't we go and ask the jeweler?"

"Sure, I don't care!"

The jeweler gave as his verdict that the ring was real gold. The new Ulla with the black hair was going to put it on her middle finger at once, as the new Bibi had worn it on hers, but it would fit only her little finger.

"My fingers are so slim, because my mother was high-born," said Bibi.

"You are a bragging prig, that's what you are!"

"Did you say bragging?" Bibi clenched her fists and was going to start a fight, but changed her mind. "Now we have traded, and you are going to be called Ulla until Doomsday!" Her chum looked sulky. "It feels so queer and gloomy to be called Ulla. Let's swap back!"

"Not on your life! We *have* swapped, and he who

gives and takes back gets black children. Well, so long! I have something important to do."

"What?"

"That's a secret."

"What secret?"

"You'll find out to-morrow."

"Gee, tell me now, won't you?"

"No, to-morrow. Good-bye, Ulla!"

"Good-bye—Bibi."

The new Ulla sauntered along slowly, turning her gold ring; she was not especially happy. But the new Bibi danced through streets and alleys. She had never cared for the name of Ulla; it sounded like the hooting of an owl in the pear tree, which had often kept her awake.

Bibi raced home and upstairs, and poked ten-oere and five-oere pieces out of her clay pig with a knitting needle, until she had poked out two kroner;[1] that ought to be enough. Then she rushed through the streets again, pushing everybody aside so as to get ahead quicker. She did not stop until she was in the office of the *Journal.*

"I should like to have an ad in the paper!"

[1]A krone ("crown") is 100 oere, and is worth about 25 cents.

"Hello, Ulla!" said the editor, who played billiards with her father at the Club every Saturday night. Bibi looked at him as if she had never seen him before. "One generally says How do you do, Ulla."

"Oh, are you talking to me? My name is not Ulla, I should like you to know."

"What's that? Your name is not Ulla? Since when?"

"Since a little while ago. I have changed my name to Bibi, and I want you to put it in the paper. Here is one krone, I suppose that's enough. Put it in big letters and give it a black border, like the death notices. Here is the money."

"And what does your father say to this?"

Bibi frowned. "Do you want the ad or don't you? If you don't, I am going to take it to the socialist paper."

"My goodness, little—Bibi! Of course we will take it. We certainly are not going to refuse that much money. What do you want us to say in the ad?

"*It is hereby announced that on this date Ulla Stensen and Bibi Leth have traded names. Respectfully, Bibi Stensen, of the Railway Station.* And put the broad black border round it."

"How big do you want the ad?"

"Across the whole paper."

"All right, young lady, all right!"

Bibi danced out. Thank goodness, now it could not be undone. Now for the town drummer, in a hurry.

If you do not know what a town drummer is, raise your hand. He is not just a common man who beats the drum in a band. No, he is much more than that. He is the one who spreads the important news all over town. Not everybody can afford to subscribe for the newspaper, nor has everybody time to read it, but when the drummer comes 'way into your yard and drums right outside your kitchen window, and announces that Mr. Jepsen's canary bird has flown out of his dining-room window and that there is a reward of fifty oere for the honest finder, or that Michael Thompson has freshly smoked herring, dripping with fat, for sale at twenty oere a dozen, you can't help hearing it, even if you are in the midst of your ironing, or darning your socks.

Bibi's drummer lived in a tiny room with two cats and two drums; one drum was for everyday use; the other was only for the afternoons when he played in

the orchestra at the Park, while all the townspeople listened, drinking coffee and eating cream puffs at small tables under canvas umbrellas. He was a good friend of Bibi's, and she knew most of the beats on the everyday drum. She showed him her other krone: "I'll give you this if you will announce exactly what I tell you, and not get mixed up. Better take your slate and write it down."

The drummer took his slate and Bibi dictated:

"*It is hereby announced that on this date Ulla Stensen and Bibi Leth have traded names. The deal is closed and cannot be undone until Doomsday. Respectfully, Bibi Stensen, of the Railway Station.*"

"And I am to say that exactly?"

"Absolutely. But first you are to strike a grand roll, and you must cry it out so loud that everybody hears it. You must also go into the yards. What else have you to drum out to-morrow?"

The drummer turned the slate and read: "Living sole, twenty oere a pound, fine, fat, and thick. Setter run away, named Paris.—That is a silly name for a dog—Paris is a city. Baby carriage, used, with springs, to be had from Petersen, Strommen. Fire

sale, Mortensen's basement. Auction of lath and lumber at the harbor, Saturday at twe've sharp."

"You must call out about me first of all!"

"I cannot do that. The sole has to be bought and skinned and fried for dinner."

"Well, all right, but then, make me number two; and give a mighty roll right after."

"All right."

Bibi was up in the clouds with happiness over her new name. She rushed home, took her very finest stationery, dipped the pen, and began to write; of course, she made an ink spot right off, but she did not mean to. She wrote:

DEAR DADDY:

Do not fall off your chair for I have a big surprise which cannot be done over and he who gives and takes back gets black children and you cannot guess what it is.

She was just going to sign it with the name Ulla, but remembered in time that that was not her name any more, and signed with four dots, which also could mean Bibi. She pinned the letter on Daddy's pillow

so that he could lie there and dream about the secret all night. She thought she would be too excited to close an eye, but she slept like a log.

Rat-a-tat, rat-a-tat, boom, boom! Rat-a-tat, rat-a-tat, boom, boom! The drummer is marching through the streets. He stops before each house and calls into each yard. He calls out that Ulla and Bibi have traded names, and he gives them a mighty roll before and after . . .

What a commotion he aroused! The principal of the school objected to "such tricks," but Bibi stood her ground. And before a year had gone, people had almost forgotten that there had once been a black-haired Bibi and a light-haired Ulla.

If you do not believe this story, you can go and ask the drummer or the editor who printed the notice 'way across his paper and gave it a broad black border —all for one krone!

CHAPTER III

BIBI GOES TRAMPING

WHEN Bibi wishes to go away, she nearly always asks her father's permission; but, of course, it may happen that he is not at home or must not be disturbed in the office. In that case, she sometimes does take the train out of town, or leaves on a farm wagon, or does other forbidden things. She knows very well that this is wrong, and each time writes home as soon as possible, to keep her dear beloved Daddy from worrying. The following letter tells how she got out on the heath in the middle of Jutland, where everything is much more old fashioned than in the towns. All her letters are full of pictures that she makes herself. It is as if she had been born with a lead pencil in her hand. She can easily go without food for half a day, or even a whole day, if she has spent all her money or has lost her purse; but she cannot exist without a pencil. Her fingers itch to draw pictures. If nothing else were handy, I think

she would take a stick and draw pictures on the ground, or dip her finger in a bucket of tar and paint with it. She is a born artist, and if we follow her later in life, as I hope, we shall find out what becomes of her. Maybe she is going to be a great painter. Again, maybe she is only going to be a—countess in a big castle. Time enough to speak of that. But if she should spell one or two words a little wrong in her letters, or forget her commas, do not think that she is stupid or lazy. Very often, when people can do one thing very well, they are poor at something else. Grown-ups do not understand this, but children do—and children understand everything much better than the grown-ups.

Here is Bibi's letter from the heath:

Dearest Daddy:

Please do not have the drummer call out about me and I am neither dead nor run over nor bitten by a mad dog for we haven't any here in Denmark but I should like to be bitten by a mad dog some day and be sent down to that Pasteur in France who cures mad dogs so that you do not die from the bite, I have not drowned in the Gudenaa either. I wanted to

write almost at once but I had not money enough and I bought a lollipop with what I had but now I am sending the letter without any stamps for, what about it? They know you at the post office.

At school we heard about the Crusades which are awfully tiresome did you ever learn about the Crusades Daddy and I went to sleep and was put out of class and got a bad mark but there was an organ grinder in the yard and I jumped up in the window, and he said there were gypsies north of the town and I ran up there. There they were, five green wagons full, but I have heard that they are apt to steal children with light curly hair and make them do

tricks, so I borrowed the wash line in blacksmith Dyrborg's yard (I forgot to ask his permission for I was in a hurry, and there were only three shirts hanging on it but I hung them on the garden fence), and I tied the wash line round my waist and gave one end of it to Mrs. Jokumsen she sells watercress and pleats ministers' ruffs on the other side of the road, and I asked her to pull me out in five minutes, so that they wouldn't steal me. The door was open and I went right in. It was great fun. They cook in the bedroom and the chickens mess around in the beds, and the children sleep on shelves one above the other as if it were a pantry. The children are quite brown from the sun, and coal black with muck which I must

not say, well then dirt, and they wear almost no clothes, like the negroes in Africa. But I do think the men steal gold crosses besides children for at school I wore mine on a velvet ribbon round my neck and in the wagon it had suddenly disappeared a little while after the man had tied the ribbon, because he said it had become untied. I would not have minded being stolen just for a short time to try it, but when the five minutes were up Mrs. Jokumsen jerked the line and upset a chair on which they had some meat balls in a wash bowl and my how they scolded me in gypsy language! and then they threw water at me.

I was just going home when I suddenly smelt heather in the air and it came from one of the freight cars that stood open and had "Hald" painted on it and Hald is in the middle of the heath where all the heather and the snakes are. I couldn't help it Daddy, and I am awfully sorry that the train started while I was inside. I have my toothbrush along; I always carry it in my pocket because you say that one is common if one does not brush one's teeth morning and evening and I do not want to be common. Somebody told me that pumice stone is good for the muck

on one's hands, scuse me, dirt. Daddy I am so sorry that you had to be alone on Sunday, yes I am; but I have not put my feet inside of the cattle car because you said that you are not going to have the house full of vermin so I do not smell badly and the flees which I probably have are from the bed for we sleep on straw or perhaps they are from the chickens for they bite terribly, just like chicken fleas. Do by all means write Miss Fagerlund (remember to put it Miss Fagerlund, School Principal, or she will be cross) and tell her I am in bed with high fever and you think it is going to be typhoid fever or measles and tell Doctor Miller to say the same. It was so terribly hot in the freight car that I perspired, and I was afraid engineer Larsen would tell on me and send me home so I did not dare go to him, so I crawled up through the trap door and stayed on the roof while the train was going, wasn't that smart? But I won't do it again for afterwards I heard that it is very dangerous and one can get one's head cut off by the telegraph wires, but I lay very quietly and stared up in the air and tried to guess what we were passing. I really didn't get so very dirty but of course a little.

But imagine Daddy when we came to Langaa the

car was taken off for it was going to be loaded for Hald later, but I sneaked over on the other track and jumped into the Viborg train, for that conductor is a friend of mine, and I went third class for I had lost my hat and torn my dress terribly, I do not know how, but Jensine can easily put in a few stitches and make it look better than the peasant's wife did. There were only peasants in the car and they played Siavinsel (that is a card game) and they were going to a funeral on the heath. One of them said I could ride with him when we left the train, but only in an ox-cart, and I had never tried that. Two great big oxen with horns like these, that is the truth. We rode through nothing but heather, but of course there was sand and not heather on the road, and it creaked like shoes that have not been paid for, and there were

as many butterflies as there are flies at baker Sennel's. The man to whose funeral we were going had died of a potato which went down his windpipe so pleese, pleese be careful Daddy, and it was an awfully big funeral. More than a hundred wagons and carriages besides people walking. And we passed two dolmens, *real* dolmens! They have been excavated for the Norse Museum, but if I find another I am going to excavate it all for myself, for why should that museum take everything?

The peasant woman was so busy cooking that she

never asked who I was. We were shown into the best parlor, you know Daddy the one which the peasants never use except on special occasions. It was really nice, with chests all around. The coffin was black and stood in the middle of the room, but the floor was scoured as white as anything and it was sprinkled with sand, as we strew sugar on our pancakes. We sat around for a while and each got a small square board for they had only five plates which were of tin and stood in the plate rack, and the wife and some girls in such funny costumes went around and put a big piece of omelet with bacon on each board. I was as hungry as a wolf. They all had brandy and drank to each other's health, but I thought that was not nice to the man in the coffin but then the lid was hammered down with nails and the coffin was put on a hay wagon for here on the heath we haven't such a nice hearse with black curtains and horses with black masks as we have at home. It was a very long way to the churchyard, but we had musicians along. One played a clarinet and two had accordions and one a French horn, but it was full of spit and out of tune and I wish it had stayed at home. The minister said something about our Lord and the women

wiped their noses in their fingers. I should think they might have used their aprons if they had no handkerchiefs. The widow was not along for she had to stay at home and cook some more, for the real dinner was to come afterwards.

Of course, I could not stand there drawing a picture of the minister right under his nose, but I think it is a good likeness anyway. I never saw such a churchyard before. The Sahara desert must look like that, only bigger. Not a tree or a lilac bush or a privet hedge which you like so much, but only little sand mounds with kind of white rings around to hold the sand, and then wooden crosses and wreaths of black and white beads, some very, very big, some with glass in the middle like a window, and inside the window there was a piece of paper with a hymn printed on it. If only you had been there Daddy what a lark it would have been! When you have grown stone old and baldheaded and have retired you and

I are going to go round the world three times, in case there is something we have forgotten to see the first two times. Sometimes I long so much for you that I almost cry, but thank heaven then I forget you again.

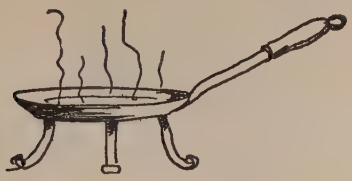
After the funeral we went back to the widow of the man who choked on the potato and all the way home the music was playing and my feet were dancing.

Then we had all we wanted of pork sausage (about as long as my skipping rope) and pork roast and beets and head cheese and blood sausage, and we drank coffee punch and danced. The widow did not dance, because her husband had died, and she had to go around and pour coffee punch all the time. Many of the men danced in their stockings and shirt sleeves, and their shirts were checkered and of wool like the featherbeds at Jensine's mother's; and they had silver buttons in their vests and smoked long pipes. Then they asked who I was and where I came from and what my name was and who my father was, and all such things. Well I said that the gypsies had stolen me when I was little and that I was really a princess, but I had run away from them because they whipped me with the dog whip.

One of the peasants whose name is Lars—he is terribly fat but very nice—got real tears in his eyes and said I was a nice little girl and I might stay with him

and be his daughter for he and his wife had no children. So here I am. His buildings surround his yard on all four sides, but there is no stork's nest on the roof and he has no bull either. I sleep in something that is called an alcove, it is like a hole in the wall, in which a bed has been placed with curtains that go way down to the floor; Lars and his wife sleep in the other alcove, but I do not like that, for they snore, and they get up to feed the cattle at four in the morning. I go to school only three days a week, that is all that is

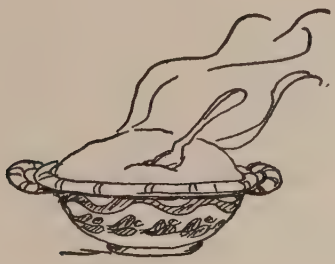
required here in the summertime. I think I will beat it to-morrow for I shall soon know it all by heart; only I have to find a dolmen and dig it out, after that I am coming home. And then I shall explain all the pictures to you and color some of them. There is such a cute little calf here, how I wish they would give it to me. It licks my face so that I really need not wash but I do anyway. We eat thick milk, and sour milk porridge cooked with big grits, and we all eat together out of a big red earthenware dish, and we have



wooden spoons. After that we eat salt pork right from the frying pan which has three legs and is placed on the table; and we peel the potatoes with our fingers and lick our spoons and wipe them in our armpits where I am so ticklish, and then we hang them under the beam in the ceiling.

I haven't seen any viper yet, but Lars has the skin of one which he killed when he was a boy. Lots of kisses from your own BIBI.

And that ended the letter.



CHAPTER IV

BIBI'S GRAVEYARD

POOR people have to be content with the very poorest soil in the graveyard, where not even the grass will grow; and their graves are so small that there is hardly room for the coffins. To make up for it, rich people are buried in fine black soil and have graves adorned with weeping willows and iron fences, and garden seats which are tied to the trees with iron chains, like dogs. They have big marble stones on their graves, just as one puts paper-weights on letters to hold them down; but the poor get nothing but a wooden stick wearing a number.

Besides the rich and the poor, there are the very high-born people. They cannot be buried in a common graveyard with the common crowd; while alive

they ride in carriages to keep apart from all kinds of shabby people; and they are buried in chapels. A chapel is a small separate room in a church. Or maybe they are buried in the crypt, which is the church basement, but crypt sounds better. Both the basement and the small rooms of Roskilde Cathedral are packed full of the very highest born people in Denmark—kings, queens, princes, and princesses. They are lying in enormous marble coffins, or in coffins covered with velvet and trimmed with silver, and you have to pay admission to see them, as if they were figures in waxworks. Most people think that this is so very aristocratic that they would be quite willing to die twice if they could be buried in such style one of the times; but that cannot be done.

Would you believe that there is anything finer than to be buried in a chapel or a crypt? There is. I know of two still finer ways. One is to be buried in a pyramid, one of those buildings which the Egyptians spent ever so many years in building and which are now used for the travelers to climb. Only the Pharaohs, who were the old kings of Egypt, were laid in pyramids.

But by far the grandest, you must admit, is to have

an entire graveyard all to one's self. Bibi has her own garden; so have many others, even small children. But in the corner of the garden belonging to Bibi's father there is a little graveyard, surrounded by a hedge of lavender which gives a lovely fragrance. You know the smell of the beautiful blue lavender, don't you? Just one lavender blossom rubbed between your

hands will make them stay fragrant until you wash them again; then imagine what a whole hedge of lavender with millions of flowers must be like!

The graveyard is in a corner of the garden full of sunshine whenever the sun shines. Bibi herself made her graveyard and takes care of it; she weeds it, waters it, rakes it, and plants flowers in it. No one but she and her father may enter it. You just try to!

In the old crooked lanes where poor people live, Bibi sometimes sees a beautiful flower in some window (poor people in Denmark always have beautiful flowers in their windows); then she will knock politely on the door, and ask for a cutting of it for her grave. She always gets the answer, "With the greatest pleasure," for the whole town knows about Bibi's grave. Thus, her graveyard is as full of different beautiful flowers and plants as the largest zoölogical gardens are full of different animals.

Now, I suppose you would like to know who is buried in that exquisite, dainty little graveyard. It has but one grave, so you will think that probably some one person is buried there. But, no; unfortunately, that isn't so. While it is a real little graveyard with a real little grave, yet nobody is buried in it.

The grave is empty, but Bibi pretends that her beloved mamma rests there—and then—you know, then she *does!* I think you all know, don't you, that one can imagine something so long and so vividly that finally it becomes almost real.

Bibi knows quite well that her mamma is buried in Ribe[1] where her daddy was station master at that time. She also knows that he goes to Ribe every year, to decorate the grave with flowers on her mother's birthday. But he will not let her go along. As a rule, Daddy allows her everything; but as soon as she begins to hint about going to Ribe, Daddy's eyes take on a look which makes her weep and she gives her big word of honor never, never to try to get down there by herself.

With matters standing thus, what else can she do but make her very own little graveyard for her very own little mamma?

When winter draws near with its cold weather—for Denmark does not belong to the warm countries that have neither frost nor snow—Bibi trots far out in the woods and cuts a lot of pine branches with the

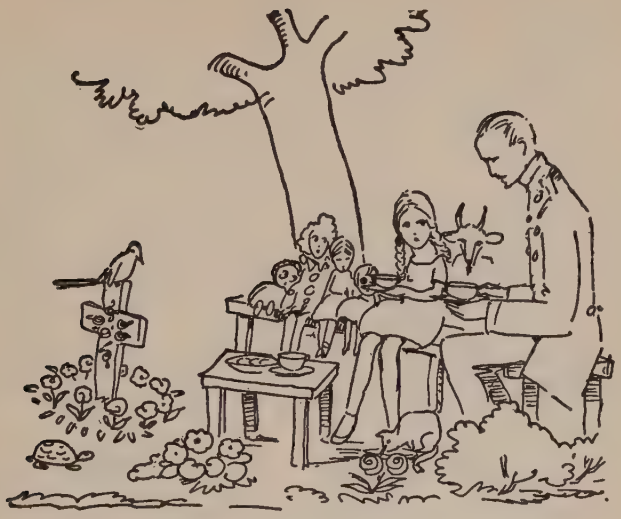
[1]Pronounce Reebey.

sharp kitchen knife that Jensine will never let her use. It is forbidden; but Bibi asks nobody's permission. Why, it is for her mamma's grave! Should her mamma perhaps be cold while other people have fires in their stoves, just because it is not allowed to cut branches off the trees? I should hope not! It is

true, pine branches can be *bought;* the farmers come to town with their wagons full of them, and they are used for covering plants in the gardens or in the graveyard. But Bibi does not want to *buy* branches for her mother's grave; she wants to be certain that the grave is kept nice and warm. Not a day passes without her thinking of her little mother and her little grave. She has many intimate friends; but her deepest secrets are told only to her mother in the grave.

After Bibi has been tramping and has had many adventures of which she tells Daddy in letters full of drawings, she sits down on the little bench in her own graveyard and whispers about it all to her mamma—also about what she did wrong. For we always know quite well when we have done wrong, even when we pretend that we couldn't help it because we did not know any better. We *always* know.

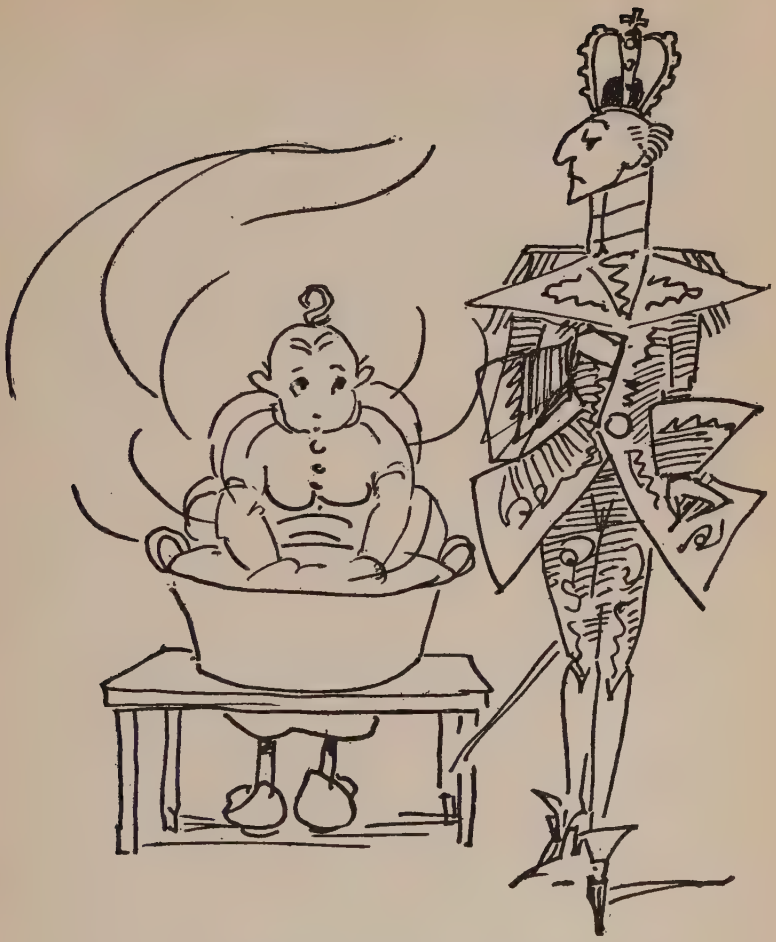
Sometimes, when she is sitting there on the bench she feels so strange and sad inside that she wants to weep; but that wouldn't do. For if your mamma is in heaven she feels sad about it when you weep down here. One must be very careful not to make one's mamma sorry.



In sunny weather, the dolls sit on the bench and keep watch while Bibi is at school, and her tame magpie sits there, too. Sometimes she gives little parties there, but only for Daddy, Mamma, and herself. She moves her little play table down, and covers it with one of the fine napkins with a crown in one corner; and she brings the chocolate and pours it into the cups. But one cup is never emptied. And at every party Daddy is so quiet, and has the far-away look in his eyes. Bibi knows very well whom he sees in his mind.

Then Bibi gets furious. Perfectly furious. But only inside. You know how one can be furious inside, even without saying a word about it, don't you? Bibi clenches her fists and scolds terribly—that is, inside. She thinks of all the worst street expressions she ever heard to give vent to her anger at those horrible people who cut her mamma's hand off because she married Daddy and made a "messylance" with him. Even if Daddy says "pneumonia," Bibi is convinced that it was that "messylance" that caused her mamma's death.

When we are very angry with someone and want to have nothing to do with him any more, we Danes say we have "struck his hand off." That means only that we do not want ever to see him again. But Bibi takes it literally. Jensine and others have told her that her ever so high-born grandparents "struck their daughter's hand off" when she made the misalliance to marry a station master. Bibi does not know the word misalliance; she calls it messylance, which really makes no difference. It means that one has married below one's rank, for instance, a king marrying a washwoman. A washwoman may be perfectly nice and all right, but she is not quite the right person to



A KING MARRYING A WASHWOMAN

marry a king, so that would be called a misalliance. In Denmark, there are very many noblemen who have belonged to the nobility and lived in fine castles for so many centuries that they finally have come to believe themselves made of another kind of flesh and blood than ordinary people. Bibi's mother was a countess, and had a count and countess for parents, which is something very grand; but she thought more of Bibi's daddy than of all the finest castles in the world. So she married him, and that was why her parents struck her hand off. Bibi knows that, and detests her grandparents with all her might. She thinks much more of cockroaches than she does of them.

Sometimes, Bibi makes little presents, wraps them nicely in pink tissue paper, and lays them on the grave. In the evening, she carefully carries them upstairs to the room where all her mamma's nice things are kept. It makes her heart throb to enter that room. If she opens a drawer or the closet door only the least bit, she gets a whiff of the lovely fragrance of violets and dried roses which her mamma used to have. Bibi loves her mamma better than anything else in the world—except, of course, Daddy.

Whenever she finds a young bird or a poor sick cat or a skinny dog which nobody cares for, she picks it up and brings it to her mamma's grave. There she washes its wounds and bandages it, and feeds it, if it is a bird; and it seems to her that her mamma is quite near and is helping her. And if, in spite of all, the young bird should die, she wraps it nicely in a white shroud and lays it into the grave with her mamma. Mamma herself is like a bird with wings now.

But if Bibi has made Daddy sorry by doing something wrong, she goes down in the garden and skulks about outside of her graveyard for a long time; somehow, she does not quite dare go in and sit down on the bench. But all of a sudden she presses her hands together and runs in there, throws herself down on the grave, and whispers to her mamma that she will never, never do it again. Never. It is often

hard for her to keep her word, but you *do* keep your word to your mamma. One always does.

Bibi did wish her grave to have a marble stone or a cross or a marble book with the name carved on it, like other people have on their graves. She would often mention it to Daddy, but he would only shake his head and look out of the window. So she gave up asking for it, and pondered and pondered until she thought of the right thing to do. She went to the carpenter, and made him give her two pieces of wood, of which she made a little cross. She painted it white, and decorated it with all kinds of flowers on one side: but on the front side she painted, with the finest letters she knew, the three words:

MY OWN MAMMA

CHAPTER V

BIBI'S BIG WORD OF HONOR

ORDINARY people have, at the very most, one word of honor; sad to say, many have none at all. That word of honor must, of course, be kept. For it is as solemn as an oath, and we all know that an oath is about the most solemn thing in the world, and that one must be very careful about giving it. As I said, other people have one word of honor; but Bibi, who is not like other people, has two. Just as you have one school dress and one nice dress, Bibi has her common word of honor and her Big word of honor. She uses her common one, which we might call her little one, at school and to strangers; but she gives her big one only to herself and to her father. And while she is not so very particular about her little word of honor (just as we will say, we had the time of our lives to-day, and perhaps we will say the very same thing to-morrow), she would never think of breaking her big word of honor. She would rather

BIBI HAS GIVEN HER FATHER HER BIG WORD OF HONOR

BIBI IS NEVER AFRAID OF THE DOG

have her slender little hands cut off, or her pointed little white teeth pulled.

She has given her father her big word of honor that when she has gone tramping, she will always send him word as soon as possible, no matter where she is. And she does. Otherwise, he wouldn't have the slightest idea where in the world she was, or what had become of her. She understands very well that there is nothing more dreadful for a father or a mother than worrying about their children when they do not know what has become of them. That goes without saying. Bibi sends word wherever she is—not only if she can, but really also when she can *not*. It is often very difficult.

Sometimes she finds herself in a strange town, perhaps because the train carried her too far, as she forgot to get out where she had planned; and then, perhaps, she has forgotten her purse, and has not one oere along to buy stamps or food. Well, she can always find food. In the summertime, there are gardens with carrots or peas, or a cherry tree or a plum tree; and if you are starving, it is not wrong to take food, only you must not run away, but stay and explain if somebody comes and sees you. How-

ever, Bibi doesn't like to have anybody come, for one does feel somewhat like a thief inside, after all. In a pinch one can pull up a turnip from a field—that is not stealing; or go to a house and ask for a glass of milk—that is not begging. And as for a bed, why, there are haystacks all summer long; and when it rains, one can go into a barn. In winter, things are a little harder; but then one does not visit so many strange places in winter, but chooses the towns where one has friends. Also, one is apt to make friends everywhere, and often someone invites you to his home to see his children or maybe his little dog. Out on the road, you often meet nice people. Some of them are tramping "professionally," as they say. They also call it fighting; but that does not mean fighting with a real sword, as the soldiers do, or fencing, the way ladies may learn it; they only jog along to find a bit of work, or to beg a little food; that is what they call fighting. Bibi knows many of them. They are always nice to her, showing her the right way, and telling her which farmers will give you milk and bread, and where to beware of the chained dog. But Bibi is never afraid of the dog. She just stops at a little distance from it and speaks

kindly to it until it begins to wag its tail. Of course, it feels a little sheepish at first because it made such a racket; but at last it comes and licks her hands. She knows that there is not a dog in the whole world that will hurt you, if you are only good and kind to it.

You see, wherever she is, Bibi can really always take care of herself; but to scare up money for a postage stamp may be a bit difficult.

Daddy has asked her always to have a two-krone piece with her for an emergency, either tied in her handkerchief or placed in the tip of her shoe. But somehow or other, that two-krone piece is likely to disappear. Besides, one often meets a poor old man or woman in sore need of a pair of felt shoes or a soup chicken—there is nothing better than chicken broth for old people. One's handkerchief gets lost. Always. Where do all the lost handkerchiefs go, I would like to know?If they were hung in a row on the telegraph wires, I think it would look as if all Denmark were continually washing handkerchiefs. I don't know of anybody who does not lose handkerchiefs, but nobody seems to find them. If your two-krone piece is in the tip of your shoe, and your shoes get full of sand which you shake out in a ditch, the money rolls

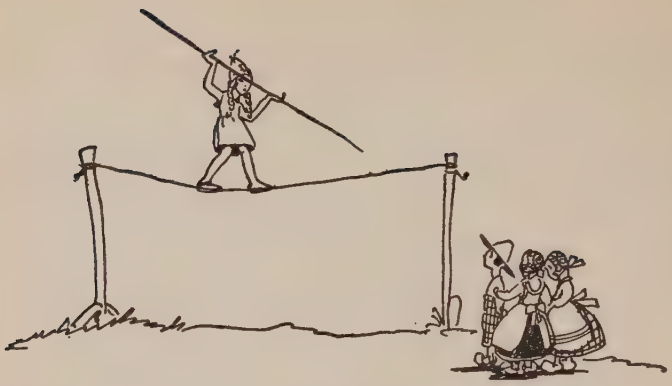
down into the mud and weeds at the bottom of the ditch.

But your big word of honor has to be kept. If you haven't the money for a stamp, you have to find some way of earning it. Daddy must have his letter. *Daddy must have his letter.*

If you are lucky, you may find a couple of old horseshoes, which not only bring good luck but also can be sold as old iron at an oere a pound. And if you happen to pass a dumping place and can pick up a few rusty hoops or a frying-pan, you may also find a man who buys rusty iron. Or perhaps you can go and ask a butcher whether he should happen to have a few old bones to spare. He generally has, and you can sell them again for an oere a pound, but it is a bother to lug them around. A stamp costs eight oere, so you must have at least eight pounds of bones or iron. If you can manage to get ten oere together, it is, of course, ever so much nicer; that enables you to spend two oere on a "slick." A slick is made of burned brown sugar which is poured into a tiny paper cone; it is thick and tough, and you can work it with your tongue as you might work glue in a tube. A slick will last you more than an hour, even if you

suck it steadily. It tastes a great deal better than oysters or roast duck—there is no comparison.

But if you have the misfortune to strike a city in which no one buys old iron or bones, or if you find neither horseshoes nor rusty kettles nor butchers with old bones to give away, you have to perform tricks to make money. Bibi knows several tricks. One consists in climbing a flagpole and standing on one foot on the top of it, crying "Hurrah!" She will not do it for less than two oere, so it takes four flagpoles to provide money enough for a stamp. And it is queer how often people are finicky about their flagpoles—one would think they were afraid their flagpoles would break if you climbed them and stood on one foot on them; why, they are used to being blown and pushed from all sides by the wind! People do not want you to walk over their lawns, either, and the flagpole is always in the middle of the lawn. In most gardens, the lawn is kept to be looked at and not to be walked on, except by birds and ants. When Bibi gets her big castle, the whole garden will be covered with a lawn, and everybody will be allowed to play and dance and turn somersaults on it to their hearts' content.



She can also do a tight-rope dance on a clothesline. The necessary balancing pole is easily found. But people take their clothes-lines into the house when the washing is dry; and if the washing is still hanging —my goodness, then it certainly won't do to walk on the line! Once in a while, you may find a clothesline with just one or two clothes-pins and a little bit of washing on it. You charge half an oere admission and collect the money in advance; but just as you are standing midway on the line the woman of the house will come out with a tub full of wet clothes—and then how she scolds and takes on! "You just get out of this yard and be quick about it!" So you have to return the money and go hunting for another clothesline.

If everything else fails, Bibi still has her "Big Trick" left. She does it only as a last resort, for it is a little dangerous; also, it ruins her fingertips so that she cannot grasp her pencil for many days. Bibi thinks our Lord might have created our fingers differently: instead of those stupid nails on our fingers, He might have provided something with which we could draw pictures without holding a pencil.

The big trick is simply great; it is good enough to be done in a real circus. But, believe me, it was hard to learn! It took the longest time to keep from falling down when one had climbed only a foot. Bibi got it from a real—now don't tell this to a living soul, for only Bibi's father knows it—from a real *burglar.* I am going to tell you how it happened that Bibi made friends with a real burglar. Of course, he was one of the nice burglars; perhaps there are some that are not quite so nice. Bibi *fell over him!* Just think, that is

literally what she did. Do you remember at the beginning of this book, in the introduction that one "simply must read," mention was made of Himmelbjerget, the highest point in Denmark? It is about as high as two church towers, one on top of the other. Knowing Bibi, you will understand that she could not keep away from Himmelbjerget, but had to go and look at it with the intention of climbing it and possibly rolling down. She had joined some peasants who were going up the Gudenaa with a whole wedding outfit. They had all the furniture piled up on a flat-bottomed barge, and had even remembered to bring a cradle and a chaff-cutter. They were poling the barge night and day, and Bibi helped them when their arms got tired. She sneaked ashore near Himmelbjerget; but there were so many hills covered

with heather and brushwood that she lost her way. Suddenly, she fell right on her face, and somebody began to swear and scold terribly. That was the burglar—imagine! She had stumbled right over him. There he was, poor fellow; a viper had bitten him badly behind the shoulder, where he could not suck out the poison. He was writhing and twisting to get at it when Bibi stumbled over him. She knew very well that the wound had to be sucked if the man were to live; but he didn't look so very clean and nice that one was anxious to do it. She was about to run away when something inside of her said, "You bad girl! Do you think Christ would have behaved that way if he had come upon a man bitten by a viper? Would he have hesitated to suck out the wound, only because the man was a little grimy?" Blushing with shame over her meanness, she went to work and got that wound sucked in a jiffy. Then she tore a strip off her white petticoat, although it was made from one of her mamma's nice ones; and she bandaged him as neatly and prettily as if he had been a dog or a cat or a chicken.

Of course, the burglar was overjoyed to get rid of the poison and keep on living; and there wasn't a thing he would not do for Bibi to show his gratitude.

They became fast friends, and he took her 'way up to the top of Himmelbjerget and down again, and told her all his secrets, and about his being a burglar. What a time he had had in prison! And breaking out! He knew a way of breaking out which only very, very few people could take up after him. What way was that? asked Bibi. She was really anxious to know. Well, said he, he simply climbed the wall. Was that all? she questioned; she could climb a wall, too. But no; he could climb a wall with nothing to hold on to. A wall as smooth as a red brick house. That's what he could do!

Gasping with excitement, Bibi fairly swallowed his words. If only she had a red brick house right there and could try it! It could not be done on a painted wall, he said, or a wall covered with wall paper. Only flies and sometimes mice could climb those; but brick was all right.

Bibi went into what was evidently the parsonage, and asked for a little milk for her friend who had been bitten by a viper; milk is an excellent antidote. Why, certainly, said the parson's wife, she might have as much as she wanted. And the way that burglar could gobble up the milk! Bibi would have liked to

tramp with him for a whole week; but he was in a great hurry, and said that it was better for her not to be with him. He was on his way to America, and from there he was going to write and tell her about that country, for she, too, wanted to go and see it some day. So she wrote her name and her father's address on a bit of paper for him. But about a month later Mr. Sorensen, the policeman, came and asked her to go with him to the City Hall, as the sergeant would like to see her. It was fun to go and see the sergeant as though she had done something wrong, when she knew perfectly well she hadn't. The sergeant had been told that she had sucked the wound of a man and had given him a two-krone piece to help him along to America; was that true? Sure it was true, and what business was that of his? It was her own money, and she guessed she could suck out as many viper bites as she pleased. But now she was told that the nice burglar had been arrested and was going to prison again. The sergeant felt very important about it, and looked as stiff as a ramrod; Bibi drew a fine picture of him afterward.

So the burglar did not get off to America that time. At Christmas he wrote Bibi a nice letter, and she

sent him a big loaf of gingerbread with a viper of almonds on top; he would know what that meant. But her father wrote to the warden and sent him ten kroner for the burglar—or perhaps it was twenty—to help him go to America and become an honest man, when his time was up.

But during the entire month before Bibi heard that her new friend had been caught, she practised scaling all the walls she saw. It hurt terribly to fall down and scrape her fingertips bloody against the bricks; but it couldn't be helped, she was *bound* to learn it. If a fly could climb a papered wall, and the burglar the prison wall, why couldn't she learn to climb the wall of a house? One had to hold on desperately with the very tips of one's toes, and somehow imagine that one's fingers were steel claws, or one would let go. She fell down again and again, twenty times, a hundred times. But the day came when she did not fall any more. That day she was the proudest girl in the whole world. Why, that was almost as good as flying!

Not one boy or girl, not a single person in town, could do that trick—not even the circus people who came and performed on the soldiers' drill grounds.

Bibi had her trick entirely to herself, as, unfortunately, the burglar was still in prison.

This, as I told you, was the trick Bibi resorted to when all other sources of income failed. She could easily ask five-oere admission for it. Sometimes it would occur to some gentleman in her audience to give her twenty-five oere, or even a krone; but she would always return his big money and demand her five oere. If you go into a store and buy a pound of flour for ten oere, you don't go and pay two kroner for it, do you?

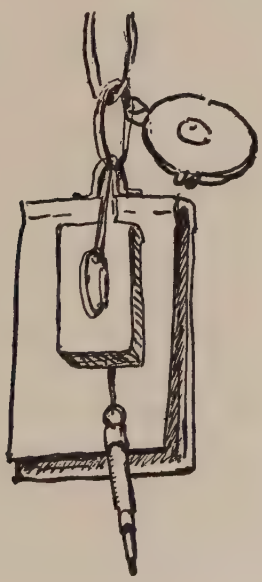
She always has with her plenty of writing paper, and especially drawing paper. That is about the only thing she never loses or exchanges or gives away. She has a long gold chain, which, besides the snake ring, is the only piece of her mamma's jewelry which Daddy lets her wear; on this chain she has a little pad, with pencil and knife, hanging about her neck, inside of her dress. When she feels the strange tickling urge inside which means that she *must* get off, no matter where to, the chain is put inside its black velvet cover. Daddy says that he would rather lose all his books and pictures than have that chain stolen; so it must be protected.

Not a soul but Bibi knows that there is a dainty

BIBI HAS A LONG GOLD CHAIN

and beautiful gold chain inside of the thick black velvet ribbon round her neck; and 'way down, with the pad, the knife, and the pencil, hangs a tiny locket with two pictures of her mamma: one as a little girl and one as a young lady at the time when she left the castle and her horrid, high-born parents, and made a "messylance" with Daddy.

As you see, Bibi always keeps her big word of honor and sends word to Daddy wherever she is.



CHAPTER VI

THE GRAY PEOPLE

DO NOT get the idea that Bibi always went traveling without permission. Far from it; she was always frightfully sorry when she "happened to" do that. During the summer vacation, when she had no duties to neglect, her father allowed her to go traveling occasionally; then there was no danger of being late to school, or of missing school entirely; and no bad marks or threats of expulsion lurked in the background. Children are meant to spend their summer vacation amusing themselves and seeing the world. All Bibi's friends went to bathing places on the North Sea, or out in the country to uncles who were ministers or foresters, or something. Some even went to uncles or aunts in Copenhagen. But Bibi had neither uncles nor aunts—no relatives at all. Of course, her father could take a short vaca-

tion, but even then he spent it quietly at home. Since Bibi's mother had died, he had never been quite happy. One summer he and Bibi had gone 'way down to Paris; but it was so sultry there that Bibi had begged to go home again. Bibi would have loved to ride on the train with her father, without knowing at all where they were going; and when they would come to a nice lake or a lovely forest or a beautiful castle, he could have the train stop; for he ruled over the train, just as the King ruled over Denmark. But he was not willing to do that.

So Bibi was allowed to travel alone. There was a station master in every town on whom she could call with regards from her father; also Daddy knew quite a lot of ministers and foresters. Bibi was never at a loss for friends. But when once she had set out on a trip, it was not so easy to know where it would take her. When you throw a leaf into the water, it is not easy to know whither it will drift. It cannot help itself. There is something called wind, something else called current. Sometimes one gets the upper hand, sometimes the other. Bibi usually took the train in the morning and came back in the evening. She had so much to take care of in her own little garden, besides

her own mamma's own little graveyard in Daddy's garden.

Bibi had a goat called Mette, which was tethered and had to be moved from one part of the lawn to the other; there was also the tame magpie which was always longing for her. Then there was her turtle, legally willed her by an old man who had had it for more than twenty-five years. During all this time, it had spent the winters lying under his sofa, hardly eating at all, and sleeping most of the time. In spring, the man would carry it out in his garden where it took care of itself and was quite happy when it found much green lettuce, and a few strawberries now and then. The old man did not get any strawberries to eat, for the turtle, whose name was Peter, tasted all of them to find the sweetest one. It would take hold of a strawberry with both front paws, snap a bite, and suck a little of the juice; then it would go to the next one. When it was tired of crawling in the garden it would dig its way out under the hedge and wander away like an ordinary vagabond. The old man was so sorry every time Peter went tramping; he would advertise it in the paper, promising a reward to the finder, and somebody would be sure to bring Peter

back. But once Peter had gone tramping in the beginning of May and had not yet returned when fall set in. The old man began to fear that his pet had died. But one fine day Bibi went out to Vorup swamp to pick cranberries, and whom did she find there but Peter! He was fat and heavy, for of course a turtle grows a good deal in the course of its long life; and he certainly could not *walk* home on his tiny feet. So Bibi lifted him up and carried him home to the old man; but on the way she and Peter became fast friends, and it was very, very hard for her to give him up. So the old man said, "When I am dead, Peter is going to belong to nobody but you." Sure enough, when the old man had died, the lawyer sent word to Bibi that she had inherited a turtle, and would she please come and take it away that very day.

Well, if you own a tame magpie, a goat named Mette, a couple of sick cats, and a turtle named Peter, you cannot go and leave them for any length of time, even though you might like to see a little more of the world.

During the summer holidays, of which I am going to tell you now, Bibi had a great many new experiences—good and bad, as is always the case.

Without any fault of hers, she had the misfortune of falling into a ditch the very first day of her journey, which made her look like the worst little tramp. But may that not happen to any of us, if we are watching a bird which may prove to be a golden eagle? Who wouldn't crane his neck almost out of joint to look after what he thought was a golden eagle? And suddenly, splash, into the ditch one goes! Yet even that was not the worst. For in crawling out of the ditch she found its sides covered with blackberry bushes. Blackberries taste good, but the brambles catch everywhere and tear everything to pieces; and Bibi came out in rags from head to foot. The sun was shining beautifully and dried her clothes in a jiffy, but she certainly was a sight! Shortly after, she met Marenstine.[1]

Marenstine was sauntering along in the meadows, driving her geese with a little stick. Bibi had often met little girls tending geese, and liked to chat with them. Marenstine's only garb was a skimpy, blue-

[1]Pronounce Marensteeney.

and-white striped dress which showed her knees. In rainy weather, she spent her days under an elderberry bush; otherwise, she would be busy keeping the geese together; at night, she was at home with her parents.

Perhaps Bibi would not have noticed Marenstine especially if something most unusual had not caught her eye: a *stork*, resting like a baby in Marenstine's

lap! She had never expected to see a stork lying in the lap of a child. She must look into that. Marenstine told her that she owned the stork, body and soul. When her parents' cottage burned, the stork would not leave its young ones alone in the nest; and it could not be chased away until the flames had swallowed the nest and consumed the little stork children. Then the stork screamed and screamed so dreadfully that Marenstine and her mother forgot all about their burning beds and tables and other possessions; they thought only of the screaming stork. It was lying quite flat on the ground, with one wing broken, and was so sick that it could

hardly open its eyes. Marenstine took it along to the neighbor's, where she and her family were going to spend the night; and she bandaged it with an old apron as well as she could. Her little brother caught frogs for it in the swamps. But at first it would eat nothing, not even the most delicious frogs. However, later on, its appetite returned, and it would gobble up all the frogs they could possibly catch. Marenstine was so fond of the stork that she took it along every morning when she went to tend her geese. They really were not *her* geese, but belonged to the woman on the big farm on the hill; and in the fall, Marenstine was to have a dress and five kroner for having tended them all summer. Bibi had never seen anything so lovely as that stork. And it was so bright! It understood every word you said to it. Bibi began to make Marenstine offers for the stork. Marenstine would not sell it for anything in this world. But then Bibi said, "Will you trade it for my red tam? It is quite new and didn't fall into the ditch."

Marenstine looked at the red tam, felt it, and tried it on; and they went down to a pool of water in which she could see herself. "No, I don't want to," she said.

Bibi thought hard. If she didn't get that stork she

would *die*. She began to tell Marenstine about her garden and her mamma, and her mamma's private graveyard in the garden, and the tame magpie, and the tame crane that had died, and the hedgehogs that came for their milk and brown sugar every evening. Marenstine listened.

Then Bibi said, "And you have all the geese—they are almost as good as storks, aren't they? And if your house burned, what will you do with Jens stork when winter comes?" She took off her shoe and stocking, and in the tip of the stocking there was a shining two-krone piece. "I will give you that, too, if I may have Jens stork. I will be ever so nice to him, and if

you will tell me your name and address, I will send you a letter and tell you how he is getting along. And I will draw a big picture of him and send it to you. What do you say?"

Marenstine gazed over the meadows. "Will you send me a real letter? Send it by mail, with a stamp on it?"

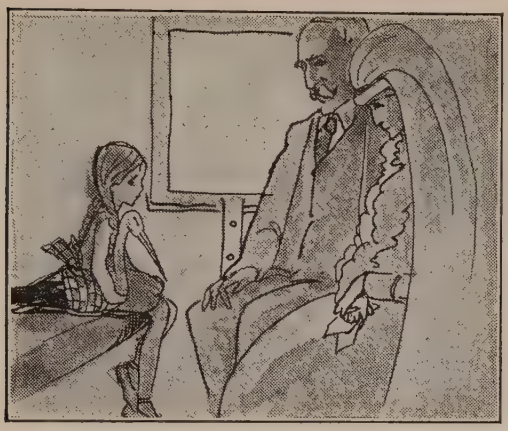
"Sure. A big letter with *many* stamps. And I can put some stamps inside, for my father is a station master and gets a lot of letters."

Marenstine could resist no longer. The deal was closed. But first Bibi went into a house and got a piece of paper, on which she quickly drew a picture of Jens stork for Marenstine; and as there was paper to spare, she also drew a picture of Marenstine with all the geese.

Of course, the stork could have walked, for its broken wing only prevented it from flying. But Bibi was afraid it would run away from her, as they did not yet know each other very well, and the stork had not seen how nice her garden was; nor did it know that the country around her town was chock full of meadows with all the frogs it could possibly eat. So she picked Jens stork up carefully and walked away with him, while Marenstine was waving and weeping and calling, "Don't forget the letter!"

Marenstine had never in her life had a letter.

Bibi thought it was fine to walk along carrying Jens stork and having his long neck touch her; he kept flapping his good wing, as if to say, "If you don't treat me right, look out!" But still, when she met a



farmer driving his wagon she asked for a lift, for he, too, was going to the station.

Arrived at the train, it occurred to Bibi that if there were others, perhaps even many, in her compartment, she would not be left in peace, as they would all ask questions and begin to pet her stork. So she did not enter a third-class compartment, which might be crowded, but went proudly into a first-class compartment with the curtains pulled in front of the windows. She thought she would have it all to herself; and just as she had entered and closed the door, the train started, so she had to stay there.

But the compartment was not empty; there were two frightfully elegant gray people in it, one on each side, a lady and a gentleman. They were so gray that they could not possibly be more so, unless they were painted with gray paint. The lady wore a gray dress and coat and veil, and gray gloves and shoes and everything, and the gentleman had gray hair and a gray hat and suit and shoes and spats and gloves; only his collar and cuffs were dazzling white. In the baggage net was a cane the knob of which was probably of real gold, and the dainty suitcases smelled beautifully of the so-called Russian leather which sometimes would make Bibi stop outside of a store and sniff for fifteen minutes.

The gray people said good-morning, and of course Bibi returned their greeting. But the lady moved a little away from her, probably because her dress revealed its contact with the ditch.

"Don't worry," said Bibi, "it doesn't come off, the dress dried long ago!" The lady smiled and asked where she was going with her stork. But Bibi did not like to tell all her secrets to strangers; Daddy had often said that you should not do so when traveling. So she only said, "Home!"

"Where is your home?"

"With my Daddy!"

"And where does your Daddy live?"

Bibi was just going to answer something impudent, but thought better of it, because she was going first class.

Then the gentleman said, "Tell me, little girl, don't you think you are in the wrong compartment? This is first class."

Bibi stared at him. "I guess I can ride first class as much as I please, for *my father* rules over all the railroads!"

"Oh, does he?"

"Yes, he does. He is a station master, he is!"

The lady started and looked almost frightened, as if she were thinking of something extremely sad; but the gentleman shook his head. Then the lady gave Bibi some lovely chocolate, and Bibi told about Jens stork, and about a peasant who had once taken her a long way up to Aalborg, riding on top of a box with the cutest little pigs which he was going to sell.

The lady said, "Tell me, little girl, does your father allow you to go around by yourself in this way?"

"Oh, yes," said Bibi.

"What does your mother say to that?"

"My mother is dead!"

"Oh, I am so sorry!"

"So am I," said Bibi.

"What is your name, little girl?"

"Bibi."

"Bibi—what else?"

But again Bibi remembered that one should not tell all one's secrets to strangers, and she did not answer.

"Are you getting along well at school, little Bibi?"

Bibi reflected. It might be all right to answer that. "I was turned out of one school because I got so many bad marks and played hookey; and in the school where I am now they are going to turn me out, too, if I play hookey and go away on the train just once more."

"How dreadful!" said the lady.

"That is not dreadful at all!" said Bibi. "You should try to sit still for an hour at a time, and get more and more bored—you would simply *have* to run away, or you would *die!*"

"And what does your father say to that?"

"Daddy says that Miss Fagerlund is an old hen."

"Mercy, does your father say that? Does he use such expressions?"

"Do you call that bad? You ought to hear *my* expressions. I learn them from the horse dealers, and I tell you they can swear. Do you want to hear it?"

But the lady and the gentleman both motioned to her that they certainly did not want to hear it.

Now the lady looked at her gold chain and said, "What a nice chain; where did you get that?" Bibi thought those people were more inquisitive than they had a right to be. Suppose she began to finger the gray gentleman's gold chain and ask him where that came from! But she said, "That used to be my mamma's."

"Your *mamma's?* Who was your mamma, Bibi?"

Again Bibi was going to give a saucy answer; but again she remembered that one really ought to have clean hands and behave nicely when traveling first class. So she said, "My mamma was a lovely high-born lady, but she made a messylance with Daddy, and then those hateful high-born parents of hers cut her hand off and then she died. If only I knew them, I would cut off their heads. When I am big I am going to do it. But it is *my* castle. When I am big I am

going to turn them out of it—that will serve them right."

She was going to continue when she happened to look at the lady and the gentleman. They were staring at each other and at her; the gentleman was nodding, and the lady was clasping her hands, as old women do when they hear something very sad, and was moving them up and down. "It is scandalous! Scandalous!" she moaned.

"What is scandalous?" asked Bibi.

The gentleman said, "Fancy letting one's child roam around like a vagabond!"

"Now, listen," said Bibi, "if you mean me, you might just as well stop talking. For I am not a vagabond, but my mother was born a countess, so in a way I, too, am almost a countess, and you need not call me any names. And anyway, don't you call my father's doings scandalous. For, if anybody does that, I'll kill him, even if I have to have my head cut off afterward."

The lady took out her handkerchief and stuffed it into her mouth, as you do with your napkin when you have burned your tongue on the soup.

Just then the train stopped. Bibi rose, held on to

Jens stork with one hand and opened the door with the other: "I am not going to travel with people who call my father scandalous. Good-bye!"

Perhaps some of you have tried to guess who the "Gray people" may be; and perhaps you have guessed rightly. But Bibi herself had no idea who they were; and that was just as well, for otherwise she would have scolded much more.

She told her father that she had met some "horrid gray people" in the train. But she did not tell him that they had called him scandalous; that would have been a pity.

CHAPTER VII

THE SUMMER VACATION

BIBI had a new experience every single day of her vacation. But the strangest probably happened the day she came down to the harbor to find the ship's boy who used to give her hardtack in exchange for sugar or chocolate. She really did not like hardtack, and one certainly risked breaking one's teeth biting it; but the name made one think of the sea, and of ships far out in the ocean, and wrecks, and sailors in distress, with only a little water in a barrel and a *sack with hardtack!* So she liked to have one or two pieces to munch when she was thinking of America or Asia or Cape Horn or Cape Verde, or other strange places.

She was returning homeward with her hardtack when suddenly she heard a queer sound, like something tapping or rattling with frantic speed. She thought it might be a sewing machine. But now it was close behind her. She turned and looked—it was *rats!* Not one rat, which she had seen very often;

not even five rats. No, hundreds of rats, thousands of rats, perhaps millions of rats! They rushed along as if pursued by somebody, they hustled and bustled over the cobblestones, and squeaked and squealed while crossing the street and dodging under the gate to Mikkel Thompson's yard. Bibi was spellbound. Rats smell horrid, but poor things, they can't help that! More and more were coming. Where were they coming from? Bibi wondered. Oh, now she understood: From the big ship that came from Halifax the other day.

She was too frightened to get her sketchbook out, which was a pity: for one does not see such a sight twice in a lifetime, even if one should live to be a hundred years.

Another thrilling experience was the one with the ants and the swamp; here is Bibi's letter telling about it.

Dear Daddy:

You cannot possibly guess where I have been and what I have done and the way I look all over as if I was dipped in measles. Listen. You know you said yourself that I might go to Langaa and take another

train from there out to where they are planting trees to cultivate the heath. But on the way I forgot it, for there was a swamp with awfully many peat stacks, and there were people who were cutting the peat and I had to get out to see it. I have forgotten the name of the station. There was a nice woman called Trine who said I might jump around and look at them cutting peat, but that it was very dangerous. So I jumped from one stack to the other. There was heather in some places, and the water between the stacks was as red as a fox. Whenever I fell in I couldn't get out again, but when I screamed someone would come and haul me out. You can imagine what fun it was. But do you know that swamp water is as cold as ice and you ought to see how my clothes got to looking, but I didn't tear any holes in my dress but later my clothes got burned in the oven. But then Trine told me that there were whortleberries farther over toward the woods, the big blue ones that grow on bushes and taste so sweet. I found quite a lot and stuffed myself with them until I couldn't eat any more. Then I felt sleepy perhaps on account of all that cold swamp water and I went into the woods and took off my clothes and hung them on a branch

all except my dress which was almost dry. But I was so tired that I did not see that I lay down right by an anthill as high as up to your chin. There were red ants in it of the kind that bite. I went to sleep. But the way I screamed and shrieked and the way they ran over me! It smarted like the man you know in history on whose back they cut an eagle and strewed salt in the wound, the wretches. But do you know what the people did? They took me with dress and all and ducked me up and down in the creek which is very small and runs into the Gudenaa. Then the men wrapped me in all their coats and put me on top of a load of peat and took me to Trine's house. They also remembered my clothes which were hanging on the branch. Trine put me to bed, but imagine Daddy

they have no sheets but only thick featherbeds with striped wool ticks. My how I perspired and then they gave me elderberry tea to make me perspire still more, for Trine said that it was dangerous to have so much ant poison in one's body. And she made omelet with bacon on the stove which is open like those old stone ones, you know, right under the chimney and she dried my clothes in the oven underneath and there were holes burned in my dress but I am having a lovely time, for the people are too poor to have the walls papered, but the walls are of heather

peat which smells good and Trine has pasted colored pictures on them and I am lying here looking at them. But I am coming home to-morrow your own BIBI.

And Bibi came home as she had promised. But one of the last days of the vacation her father was surprised by another letter.

DEAR DADDY:

I want to borrow my *big word of honor* back. Only for a week for I cannot keep it, but I have not broken it have I if I borrow it back? It is a secret. I will tell you afterwards what it is. It is nothing bad, but it is something which I am not allowed to do. But I can't help it. I have promised you on my big word of honor never to tease you to take me along, when you go away for a certain day, and never to go, you know where, by myself. But Daddy I cannot help it for there is something I am dying to do and you must not be angry. I shall keep my big word of honor

all my life only this tiny little week I am going to borrow it back. Don't say that he who gives and takes back will get black children for that will make me awfully sorry and don't go and be sorry your own

self for then I shall be sorry too. But perhaps I won't come home very soon for it is a long way. *Pleese* remember to make my little private grave as beau-

tiful as possible the day you know and put many flags into the ground and run up the big flag and sit on the bench and drink chocolate and have all the dolls sit there too. And buy some liver for the cat in Kortsen's yard, it is so pitifully thin. And take Mette out for a walk. Don't mind it if people laugh at you for Mette loves to walk with real persons. And please see that Jensine does not tease the magpie,

and if the turtle should crawl under the fence you better have the drummer call it out at once and promise a big reward to the honest finder. If *you* tell Jensine to be sure to put fresh milk with brown sugar in the garden for the hedgehogs she will do it, but if *I* write to her she will only say it is extravagant. And I think it will be all right to let Jens stork go around in the meadows by himself for a little while. He won't run away for he knows how fond I am of him and besides of course he cannot fly. He likes to

have somebody stroke his back slowly, but be sure not to handle him more than that.

Oh Daddy I am *so* anxious to do something and to come home and tell you all about it afterwards your own BIBI.

So Bibi went on to Ribe, and this is a letter she wrote from there:

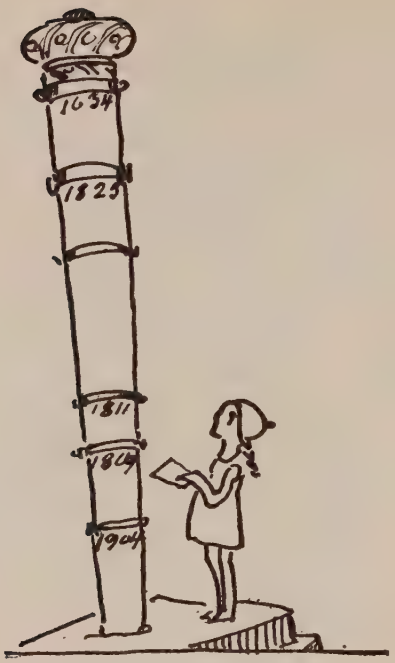
DEAR DADDY:

You cannot guess where I am! This is the way it looks from the window with all the storks on the roofs and this is the way it looks when you go in through the nice little gate. And there are five storks standing in a row on the little house that I have drawn, they stand on one leg even at night when they are asleep. You never told me there were storks' nests on all the

funny old chimneys which are no good any more. Do you know what the storks are doing? They are waiting. And do you know for what? For all the storks from the north of Denmark, and from Norway and Sweden. For on the twenty-third of August (*and whose birthday is that?*) they are all going south together, at two o'clock sharp. Did you know that? I didn't. Some of them are already waiting. I suppose they are afraid of getting their dates mixed, but how can the storks know what date it is when they cannot read? Isn't that strange? But it is also strange that they can find their way down to Egypt and back and each find his own nest, isn't it Daddy? When I stretch my head 'way out of the window I can hear frogs croak in the meadows. There must be a million

of them they make such a racket. If only Jens stork won't die with homesickness for Egypt and the other storks and the Nile. Do speak to the veterinary about it, but to Mr. Madsen, *not* to Mr. Mortensen,

for he will only say, "What does Bibi want to keep that menagerie for?" And do you know what I have seen? A woman who goes and rings a bell all over town, for they have no drummer here, so she rings about fish and auctions and hay and a merry-go-round, but it isn't coming until Tuesday and perhaps I won't be here then. I have also seen the *Flood*



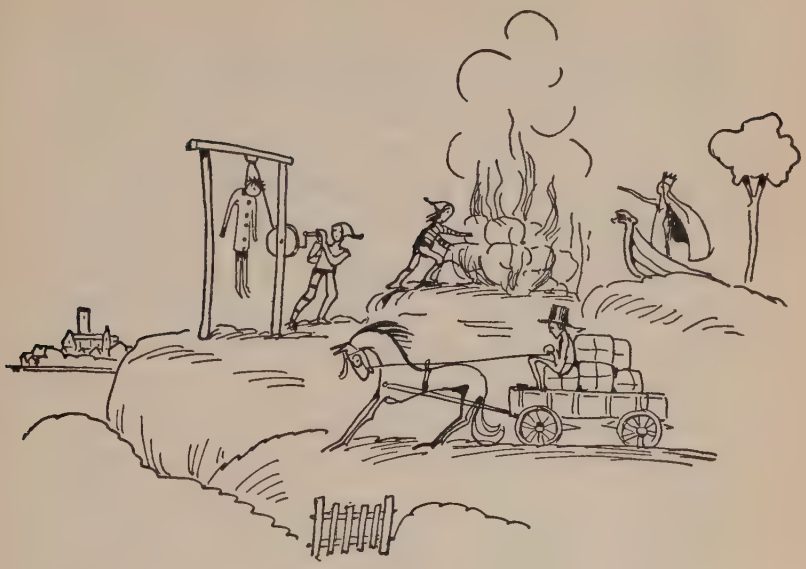
Monument, here it is! And do you know Daddy that four hundred years ago the water went 'way up to the top and *all the people drowned!* And so did a lot of islands. It is a good thing we didn't live at that time, for then we would have drowned too. Like the Flood in the Old Testament. Ribe creek is full of water-mills

for I was up on the roof for a while and saw them, and the creek is ever so blue and the cows eat yellow flowers. Do you recognize the post office? For whom do you think the letter is that she is putting in the box? And when I was sitting on the stone steps and sketching the nice house the grocer came out and saw it and said that he would give me the biggest paint box in town if I would let him have the picture. But I only took the almost smallest for that is easier to lug around.

I have read the tombstones of more than half

the graveyard, but I have not yet found my mamma's grave, but to-morrow I am going to get up at six and I will be sure to find it. And perhaps I can be back in town when the storks are going for there is a flat roof on the church tower and that is where I want to be and the key to the church costs fifty oere but the man with the nice house gave me that for I had no money at all.

I forgot to tell you that I don't know what the people I am staying with are called, but the lady came out and washed the blood off me when I had fallen because the board over the gutter was loose. They seemed to think I was killed, but I told them I had no place to stay and they said I should stay with them. I did not tell them who I was but said I was a foundling and was working for a peasant and had to get up to cut peat at five every morning and so I had run away. If I tell people who I am they ask why I am going around with holes in my dress. The lady told me that there was something called the *money crisis* in 1814 and Denmark became very poor for the money was no good any more, so it was taken out to the palace hill and burned by the wagon-full. I think it must have looked this way. Out there also stood the



gallows where the thieves and murderers were hung. Thank goodness I didn't live at that time

Your own BIBI.

Do promise not to be angry because I borrowed my big word of honor back, or I shall be ever so sorry.

When Bibi made up her mind to rise at six, she did rise at six. She belonged to those people who seem to have a watch inside of them which is always

right. Aren't those inside watches strange? Many persons can awaken just when they wish, and then they know exactly what time it is without looking at a watch. Others never know the time.

Bibi rose at six and sneaked out of the house very quietly, without taking time to eat breakfast with the nice old ladies with whom she was staying. She rushed out to the graveyard and began her search again, but suddenly remembered that she had forgotten the flowers. She could not go and congratulate her mamma on her birthday without flowers or gifts, could she? That wouldn't do. She ran with all her might back to the market-place to buy flowers—until she remembered that she did not own a red oere! She must make some money in a hurry. She had not found one flagpole in a garden nor one clothesline in a yard. She hated to do her big trick now that the man had given her the nice paint-box; she was longing so much to use it, and if she wore her fingertips bloody, she could neither draw nor paint. But suddenly she had a fine idea. Can anyone guess what she did?

It was market day. The whole market was crowded with peasants. Bibi sat down on a stone step, drew her

legs up under her, and started sketching all the people she thought looked funny. As she worked, she thought of her little mother whose birthday it was and who was lying out there waiting for callers and flowers and presents. Her pencil flew over the paper. Now it was a big square peasant who looked as if he owned all Denmark and also a little of Norway; now it was a woman holding a cage with white doves. Here came a girl with a basket of eggs on her head; and over there was a nice old grandmother sitting, surrounded by mountains of cabbages and beets and beans. Here was one of the grand ladies from the town, marketing, followed at two steps' distance by her maid with the market basket. The lady was much too grand to carry a market basket!

Bibi worked on and on. Her tongue was wiggling, as if drawing a picture inside of her mouth for its own pleasure. Bibi had heard about a man without arms who could draw pictures with his feet. She thought she would try it some day. Her toes began to wiggle in her shoes; it was very evident that she could draw pictures with them also. At last she had drawn twelve big sketches: two of the market-place with the church and the flat tower, the rest of the people.

ONE OF THE GRAND LADIES, MARKETING

She ran into the store and borrowed money for four dozen thumb tacks from her friend, the grocer. Then she rushed over to the church door, on which she fastened all twelve drawings with the thumb tacks, taking her stand beside them. People must surely have sense enough to know what that meant.

And now they came pushing and crowding. How they laughed, and how they nudged each other with their elbows, and you ought to have heard how they praised Bibi! How much did she want for such a picture? Bibi swallowed hard before giving her answer: "Fifty oere apiece," she said, for on that day she really needed money badly. And what happened? In five minutes she hadn't a picture left, but was the proud possessor of six kroner in silver and copper. Supremely happy, she rushed back to the store and paid her debts, then over to the finest flower stands in the market-place. She could not get flowers enough —one bunch here and two there, roses and sweet Williams and asters—more, more! It began to look as if she would need a whole handcart for them. But she did not want any handcart, she wanted to carry the flowers to her own mother all by herself, indeed!

It was hard work to drag all those flowers along in

the hot sun. And where was the grave? Bibi went up and down, in and out. She was going to find the grave if she had to go around until twelve at night. She *would* find it. Her own mother's own grave. I should say so!

It was noon, the church bells were ringing—at last! She saw a tall, slender marble shaft. That was it! Sure enough, on it were the names Ulrikke Elisabeth,

like her own, and below them it said, "Born Countess Huitfeld." The grave was decorated beautifully, it looked as splendid as a whole florist's window on the King's birthday. But Bibi did not notice all that at once. She saw something that made her boil with anger: A gentleman and a lady were sitting on *her* mamma's bench—the impudence! They seemed familiar to her—why, yes, they were the gray people whom she had met in the train and given a piece of her mind because they had called her father's doings scandalous. They were dressed in gray like last time, so probably they had nothing but gray clothes, but they were very elegant. Bibi was seething with rage, and on the point of chasing them out and saying bad words, when she saw that the lady was crying behind her gray veil. Something hurt inside of Bibi when she saw anybody cry; it was like seeing a starved cat sneak stealthily along the houses when one hadn't a thing for it to eat—and even if one had, it would be useless to coax it, it would be too frightened to come.

The lady recognized Bibi and said something about having a daughter buried near by: but Bibi looked around until she found another bench at a little distance, and asked the gray people please to go and

sit there, for her mamma didn't like strangers to sit on her bench. The gray people sighed and went over to the other bench, whereupon Bibi threw all the grand flowers out in the path. She did not know from where they came, but *her* mamma was not going to have strange flowers on her grave. Then she decorated the grave daintily with her own flowers and surrounded it with little paper flags which she had bought in the paper store. She wound flowers round the legs and the back of the bench. Then she took her paint-box, and covered up the words Countess Huitfeld. Such impudence! When her mamma was married to Daddy and bore the name of Stensen! Below she painted with nice big letters, red with black edges: *Wife of Station Master Stensen.* That was the way she wanted it. The gray people returned and asked her why she did that; so she told them again that Countess Huitfeld's parents were hateful aristocrats whom she loathed and detested, because they cut her mamma's hand off when she made a messylance with Daddy. The gray lady wept behind her veil, and the gray gentleman went quickly down the path. Bibi was glad they were going away, she could not bear inquisitive people. No one can, es-

pecially those who are violently inquisitive, like Bibi. She was quite aware of this shortcoming, but "that is different," she would say.

Bibi sat looking at the grave and thinking how sad it was that she had not the smallest gift for her mamma. If she only had money, she would buy a real Harz canary bird and hang it in the weeping willow over the grave, where it could sing and trill all day and keep her mamma from being lonely in the strange city. But a bird requires much more care than a human being, for of course it cannot leave the cage and get water and seed, or make a fire when it is cold.

Why did Mamma have to go and die when Bibi was just *one* year old? If she were still living, she would surely have gone along every time the prickling sensation came over Bibi and made her run away to see something new. Bibi pulled out her little locket. On one side, Mamma was sitting in the lap of her nurse, Else Prest, who was from the little island Romö quite near Ribe. On the other side, Mamma was a beautiful young lady, as she was when she ran away with Daddy. How dainty and pretty and sweet she was!

Bibi kissed the little girl in the lap of Else Prest,

and also the lovely young lady, and suddenly her Mamma seemed to be living, returning her kisses.

The gray people were standing at a distance, looking at her. That irritated her. Couldn't she get rid of them and their inquisitiveness? She preferred to leave. Besides, it must be nearly two o'clock: the storks would soon start for Egypt.

Bibi had noticed where the funny old church woman lived. She rang her doorbell and asked for the key to the church. The woman went along to open the church door and asked if Bibi really dared climb the tower all alone. Bibi made herself very brave. There was nothing she did not dare, she said, from entering a lion's cage to grasping a rattlesnake by the neck like a wool scarf. The little old church woman shook her head and said she was glad she didn't have to climb all those steps, for she had rheumatism in her knees.

The woman went away, and now Bibi was quite alone in *Ribe Cathedral.*

She caught her breath a couple of times; she had never thought that a church could seem so big when one was alone in it. Why, St. Peter's Church down in Rome, which was said to be the biggest church in

the world, was a mere nothing compared with this. Queen Dagmar lay buried here—the queen who was so pious and good that her only sin, which she confessed on her deathbed, was to lace her silken sleeves one Sunday morning.

Bibi did not quite understand why the pious queen started lacing her silken sleeves, if it was such a bad sin.

When Queen Dagmar had fallen ill, many hundred years ago, word was sent to her husband, King Volmer who, as far as Bibi remembered, had just taken the train to Viborg. He rushed back, hoping to be in time, and his hundred knights galloped after him on

their coal-black stallions. But when the King came to Ribe creek he was quite alone, such was his speed. And when he came to the castle she had just died. Wasn't that pitiful, when he had raced back that way!

Bibi tiptoed around, nosing into all the nooks and corners. It was fine to be alone, free to explore

to one's heart's content, to steal up in the pulpit or behind the altar, to lift the mats and look at the old, old tombstones covering the floor like flagstones. But as for being alone here a whole night—no, thank you!

She stopped and looked a little doubtfully at the winding staircase that was like a corkscrew with steps around it. It was cold and strange here. And suppose somebody were hiding and should come running after her! But remembering the storks, she ran as quickly as her breath would allow and her feet would carry her, up the steps, round and round. Whew, that was like a whole merry-go-round, only different. Higher and higher, higher and higher. It seemed never to end. There must be thousands of steps! Suppose, after death, one had to climb a stairway like that, up and up, 'way up to heaven! There wouldn't be many entering heaven, in that case.

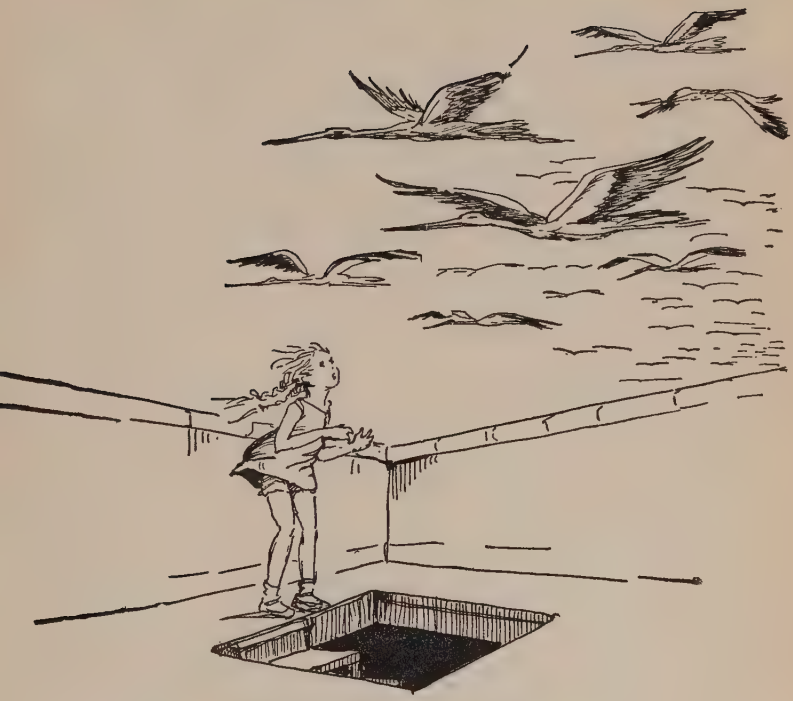
Now she is on a landing below a bell, many times larger than she. A rope thicker than her wrist is dangling from the bell. More steps, up and up. Another landing. She stops and listens. Isn't somebody coming? Her heart begins to pound. She seems to hear a faint sound on the stairway. It stops when

THE WINDING STAIRCASE

she stops, and stirs when she stirs. She touches her forehead—it is dripping wet: that shows how frightened she is. But no! she is going to show that she is not afraid.

She rushes past the next bell, which is not so enormously big; round and round she goes; and 'way up hangs the third bell, somewhat smaller than the second, still so big that she could easily live inside it if it had doors and windows.

Now she has reached the top. But what is that? Upon my word, there is another tiny little staircase leading up to a trapdoor in the ceiling! she *must* get up there, if she dies of fright. For that is the way out to the flat roof. She pulls on the rope, the trapdoor opens with a clanging noise, and she climbs out on the roof. She is so stunned that she has to sit down so as not to fall. She looks all over the world. To the North Sea and probably to England, and if she had a telescope she might even see America. Ribe creek looks like a blue silk thread without a needle. The mills are smaller than the last joint of your little finger. She rises and looks down on the town. What miserable small toy houses! They look as if they were taken out of a Nuremberg box.



THE STORKS ARE HERE

Where is the graveyard with Mamma? That little green spot over there?

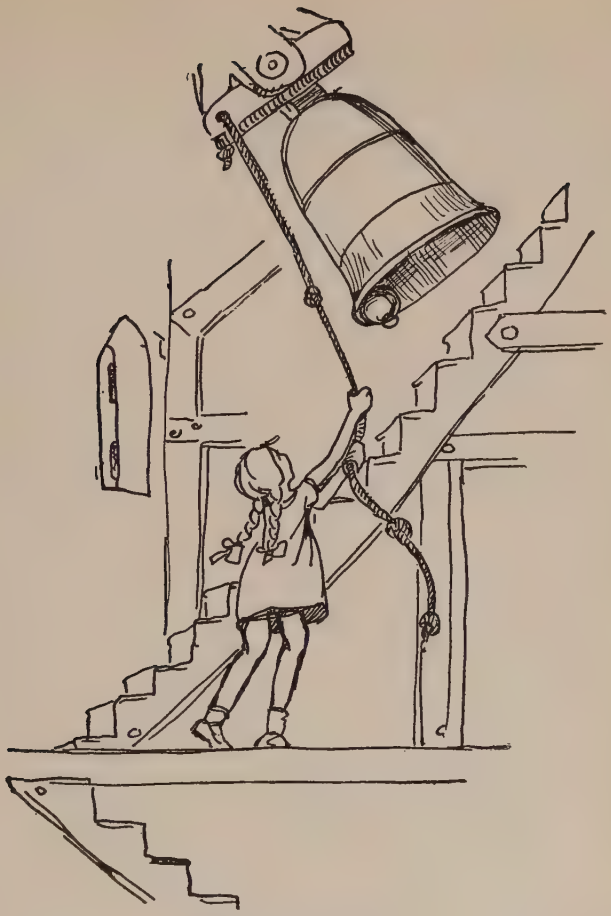
But what is that? Bibi cranes her neck. Her eyes grow as big as teacups, or almost as big. They are coming! ! ! ! She sees them far, far away. The whole air is as full of flyspecks as the windows of the mangle woman at home, who never polishes them, because she has cataracts on her eyes and can hardly see. The storks are here! The storks from all Denmark and Norway and Sweden! They are coming! They are coming!

Bibi claps her hands and shouts. She cannot help it. They are coming! They are coming! She hears the rushing as the great wings beat the air. And listen to their chatter! They must be telling each other all that has happened since last year. Bibi claps her hands like mad. Forgotten is Daddy—forgotten Mamma's birthday—forgotten all the world—only the storks and Bibi exist. She sees the long red legs, the great white wings, the beaks, the craning necks. They are coming straight toward the church. Instinctively, she stoops and covers her head with her dress. She knows they won't hurt her, but still . . . It sounds like the mill on the dike at home, grinding

flour during a storm—no, it is still louder. Bibi gropes for the trapdoor, manages to open it a tiny bit, slips down, and closes it again. But from the stairway she hears the roaring and rushing and rustling of the many, many thousands of storks.

She steals over to the small, high windows; there are big iron bars before them so she cannot fall down, and the storks cannot reach her, even if they were to try. The bell with its dangling rope catches her eye. She presses her hands together. She does not want to pull the rope—no, no. A church bell is only tolled when a dead body is taken to the chapel, or on Sundays, at the hour of service. She will not do it. But the rope seems to stretch toward her, whispering that this is Mamma's birthday, and that Mamma has had no present, and that the storks are on their way to Egypt. Bibi stretches out her hand. The rope makes her hand close round it and—Dingdong! Dingdong!

Bibi screams with all her might. Her eyes pop out of her head, her hair stands on end. Her back is as cold as ice, but her hand does not let go, the rope swings back and forth. The bell rushes back and forth. Its tongue hurries after it, and strikes it, now



THE STORM BELL

on one side, now on the other. Bibi covers one ear with her free hand. If only her eardrums haven't burst! for that makes you deaf. But she cannot let go. The rope is glued to her hand, and the bell rushes madly back and forth. She realizes that it must be the storm bell. The *storm bell!* That means either a *great fire* or *war!*

She stops a minute to catch her breath. She is dripping with perspiration. She listens: the whole tower is echoing the tolling, and from above comes the deafening rush of the immense wings. The storks are coming, coming, always in greater crowds. Bibi spits in her fists and takes hold with both hands. She cannot stop, even if she must lose her head for it. Mamma is to hear that her daughter is standing in Ribe Cathedral, tolling the storm bell because of Mamma's birthday and the flight to Egypt of all the storks in the world. She swings the rope—she is going to drop dead in a minute, but she swings the rope—her eardrums probably burst long ago, she can neither hear nor speak, but she swings the rope . . .

Boom! ! ! !

Bibi was brought back to this world by two big men seizing her arms: "So it is you, you little brat!

You come along now for a whipping in the City Hall! Rousing the whole town like that! You little imp, you!"

Bibi struggled and kicked and fought to get loose. She bit the hand of one policeman and scolded the other; but they held her as firmly as she had been holding the rope a moment ago. Downstairs they dragged her, one in front, the other behind. They did not let go of her. Bibi felt her face getting strange and stiff, as if she were freezing to death. . . .

Poor Bibi. It certainly was no joke to be dragged to the police station by two big angry policemen, and even be threatened with a whipping in the City Hall. In Denmark, to be *whipped in the City Hall* has always been the worst punishment imaginable. Much rather have one's head cut off, or be put in the real penitentiary. But to be whipped in the City Hall! And have everybody point at one in the street, saying, "That girl got a whipping in the City Hall" —Ugh! Ugh!

On the other hand, it is easy to understand that the police were terribly angry. For the storm bell is meant to be tolled in case of war, to make the men

hurry into their uniforms and over to where the war is going on; or in case of a mighty fire, to make all chase home head over heels, roll out their water barrels, and see if they are tight and filled with water to throw on the fire. Also, the bell must make the firemen, who always have another profession besides, fling aside everything else and hurry into their uniforms. If a shoemaker is calmly putting on a patch for a waiting customer, it is certainly no joke suddenly to have to throw shoe and awl aside, race round the corner to the engine house, pull out the little hose, and dash into his yellow rubber coat. And then, if the whole thing is found to be a false alarm, and only Bibi pulling the rope because of her mamma's birthday out in the graveyard—no wonder people were angry.

But, fortunately, things often turn out better than one might expect. Just listen to what happened to our Bibi. She wrote it all to her beloved Daddy:

Dear Daddy:

I have hidden in the lumberyard for I don't want to go with the gray people after all, and please don't mind a bit if the policeman writes something bad

about me for I only did it for Mamma's and the storks' sakes and I did not mean to do it at all but I couldn't help it and that is none of the hateful policemen's business. Why, they could see with half an eye that there was neither a fire nor war but just as they were going to drag me to the station the gray people came driving and they were also in the churtchyard sitting on Mamma's bench, I got rid of them, but politely without abusing them, and they stopped their carriage and the gray gentleman whispered to the policemen and pulled something out of his pocketbook I think it was ten kroner and then the men bowed and smirked at him and they took me into the carriage and we went to the hotel where I had all my favorite dishes because it was Mamma's birthday. And they asked if I didn't want to see where they lived and have my own room with pink silk curtains and slippers with swans down and a dolls house with two stories and a tower and go round the castle in a little boat and have my own riding horse. But that made me understand that they were the kind that steal children and so I said I was only going to say goodby to the people with whom I lived and I hurried to hide out here. If only they

HOW THE POLICEMEN BOWED!

don't find me for I happened to say in the churtchyard that the Countess Huitfeld I painted over was my mamma and her name was station master Stensen. But if the gray people are coming I think you ought to tell Police Sorensen to keep an eye on them. Except for their stealing children they are quite nice and the lady gave me a tiny little gold watch, but perhaps it was only brass and she just wanted to coax me the way you coax mice into the trap with flour. O Daddy I have so much to tell you about Mamma's grave and I am a tiny bit homesick for you for it is so tiresome to sit here all alone and mope. If only I had my turtle even though it does not understand much of what I say except when I bring lettuce or strawberries and then it understands quickly enough and I have no idea where I am going to spend the night. But if the moon is shining perhaps I shall go down to the shore and find amber for a long string of beads or meerschaum for a pipe for my own Daddy and goodnight in Christ's name Amen your own Bibi.

In her lonely hiding place in the lumber yard, Bibi heard the big bells ring the Angelus. It sounded so

solemn and beautiful; it was quite a different sound from the one she had called forth and which had almost knocked her all to pieces, the way a thin glass may burst in a draft. She was thinking a good deal of the gray people. It would have been fun with that riding horse; but why should she accept horses from strangers when she was expecting to have her own castle some day with perhaps a hundred riding horses which had marble mangers? She knew that for sure. The idea of going around stealing children! Probably that was why they were traveling so much.

She thought again of her mamma who was lying out there in the graveyard longing for Daddy and had

had no presents; for the tolling of the bells, which was meant to be rather a smart gift, had turned out to be a failure instead.

Bibi had an idea. She turned fiery red. She did not like that idea at all. But she knew that her ideas were somewhat like a man pulling a dog by a chain. It is no use for the dog to pull the other way, for its master is stronger. Her ideas were also stronger than she. This one pulled her and jerked her until it had its way. It wished her to leave the lumber yard and go past a great many houses 'way out to the wall of the graveyard. Bibi stopped there to find out which was the stronger. But the idea jerked and tugged, there was no help for it, she had to run and leap over the wall, as the iron gate was locked. Every evening, when the Angelus is rung, people have to leave the graveyard and the gate is locked, for no decent town wants any racket or disturbance in its graveyard at night.

When Bibi had jumped the wall and was standing inside, she was somewhat in a daze, and thought that perhaps she was dreaming; one often dreams such strange and silly things. The moon was slowly crossing the sky among a great many white clouds that

looked like wee little lambs, shivering with cold because they have just been shorn. And over there between the two black cypresses was the tall shaft at her mamma's grave. Bibi looked neither to the right nor to the left; she cared not what was path and what was grave; she only rushed ahead, jumping over strange graves and privet hedges, until she had reached the shaft and had clasped *Ulrikke Elisabeth, born Countess Huitfeld,* in her arms. Now she was safe—safe from ghosts, if such existed, from people buried alive, and from murderers who were said to go around with their heads under their arms after death. When she was with her mamma she was afraid of nothing in the whole world.

But there were neither ghosts nor murderers with their heads under their arms. Everything was quiet and still. So still that one could hear the little birds turn in their nests and talk in their sleep. The frogs were having a fine time out in the meadows—fancy hearing it so far away! Maybe they were saying, "Thank Heaven, the storks have gone away for this year! Now we shall have peace, and won't risk being eaten by a stork father when we are innocently hopping around for food for our own young ones." Be-

tween the graves there were one or two hedgehogs rustling about. What a strange noise hedgehogs could make! If only she had had a little bowl with fresh milk and brown sugar they would have come out at once, for that is the best food they know of. Bibi drew her breath deeply. How thankful she was to have escaped from the gray people! Never in her life would she wish again to be stolen by gypsies or anybody else. Now she had a new idea, a nice one which she enjoyed: She had a birthday present for Mamma! Very carefully she took off the little gold watch which the gray people had given her. It hung on a long golden chain, and was not bigger than a shilling. She wrapped it in her handkerchief, which for once she had not lost, and laid it on the grave among the many flowers.

Now let us pretend that she pulls the curtain, turns out the lamp, and goes to bed; for she is quite alone with her dear mamma, and it is nobody's business how the night passes for those two.

CHAPTER VIII

DRIVING OXEN

BIBI awoke by having to sneeze. In sneezing, one inhales and fills one's nose with fresh air. In doing this Bibi got a whiff of a fine odor which she knew and liked. It was nothing refined, and many people turn up their noses at it and cannot stand it; but Bibi had her own preferences in smell as others have in taste. And whoever is made like Bibi and has his nose tickled by a nice smell has to set out in the direction of that smell, even if he should land plumb in the ditch.

Can you guess what smell it was that Bibi inhaled by sneezing? It was *not* the smell of flowers, as one

might suppose. Neither was it the smell of fresh bread or cake from the baker's, or of the coffee for breakfast. No—it was the smell of the stable, the real cow stable! When Bibi had realized this, she jumped up from the bench where she had slept and dreamed such sweet dreams about Mamma, and plunged into the darkness in the direction of the smell. Not until ten minutes later did she catch up with it; it came from a drove of oxen on their way south.

Naturally, Bibi was also on her way south at once. But before making friends with the drivers and joining company with them, she had to count the oxen. She counted and counted, pointing at them. It was a little difficult; you can say many good things about oxen, but you cannot say that they march in orderly rows like soldiers. Bibi tried hard, and at last came to the conclusion that there were precisely three hundred and thirty-two oxen, and twelve drivers with wooden shoes on their feet, pipes in their mouths, and sticks or long whips in their hands.

While Bibi is making friends with the drivers and is jogging southward with them, I had better tell you a little about olden times.

At the time when most of the world was Danish

BIBI COUNTED THE OXEN

(as you will remember from the map Bibi drew) Denmark, or rather Jutland, was so chock full of oxen (which are merely a kind of cows) that they had to be sold wholesale to Germany. There were not yet any railroads, so the oxen had to walk all the way. They were driven together way up in the top of Jutland, in a village named Tönsbek (you can find it on Bibi's map), and from there they trudged 'way down to Hamburg. All of you know what Hamburg is, don't you? It is from there that the boats of the Hamburg-American Line go to America. From Tönsbek to Hamburg is a long, long walk for human beings, let alone oxen, which are not used to longer walks than their tether will allow. Now they had to walk four miles a day—four Danish miles, which is the same as sixteen English ones; for there is nothing small about us Danes, so we have immense miles. The trip took them eleven days. You can figure out for yourselves how many miles the poor, wretched oxen had to walk. They always went the same way. Of course, that way was called the Ox Road, although men had to walk it, too. At night, the drivers always stopped at the same inns, where they ate and drank and slept while the oxen were resting in the fields. At the end

of the eleven days, when the oxen had been rightly delivered in Hamburg, the drivers trudged back to Tönsbek after a new load. They had a grand time on their way home, doing nothing except to puff at their pipes and prate soberly, while jogging along two and two, leaning heavily on their sticks. When they came to the inns, they were cordially welcomed. The innkeepers made a fuss over them, and they were given the finest food and drinks, and good beds, all *for nothing!* Why do you think the innkeepers did that, when they had to make a living by charging for room and board? Why, that was because, not only the drivers, but also all the many oxen had to be well fed on their way down to Germany. There was good profit in that for the innkeeper. So the point was to keep the drivers satisfied, lest they should favor another inn next time they came walking south with their oxen.

We consider Bibi's drove of oxen tremendous, but it was only a small one compared to the real old droves. Now cattle and horses can be sent by train as much as you please; but there are still old-fashioned people in Denmark who prefer to have their oxen walk all the way, instead of having them crammed

tightly together in a cattle car. And that is just as well, for else, how would the drivers make their living?

It goes without saying that the ox road from Tönsbek down along the Jutland heath—where the heather grows—'way down to Hamburg or Itzehoe, smells most violently of cattle. Even a blind man could surely find his way there without asking any questions, just by following his nose. Also, it goes without saying that a road which is being tramped down by hundreds of oxen day and night is not quite the thing for silk stockings or evening slippers. It is all right for the ox drivers, for of course they wear only wooden shoes stuffed with straw. If anyone supposes wooden shoes to be uncomfortable because they are of wood, he should try wearing them awhile. But there are wooden shoes and wooden shoes. Whether leather or wood, the shoes from one shoemaker may fit you nicely, while those from another may hurt you. Some makers of wooden shoes are real artists, and their wares fit you so easily that you feel as though you wore no shoes at all. Of course, Bibi had no wooden shoes along; and so as not to look too bad when the trip was over, she took off her stockings and

shoes and went barefoot. One was sure now and then to pass a pool where the oxen could drink, and where one could rinse off enough mud to keep going until green soap and water were within reach. But she wouldn't be our own Bibi if she did not leave shoes and stockings in some wrong place on the way. Luckily one of the drivers found them and returned them to her. Her other happenings on the trip may be learned from a letter to her daddy.

Dear Daddy:

We are stopping in something called the Dike-House Inn which is just as tousled as my hair when Jensine has washed it. One would think it was a robbers nest but it isn't. I have a brand-new profession—I am an ox driver! What do you think of that? You must not be angry if I should happen to learn to swear a little for the drivers swear something awful, but I can't remember it all, but if I get time I will write it down before going home. By the way I suppose school has started, but do please send word that I have broken a leg or am dangerously ill in some hospital in England. For Miss Fagerlund surely cannot write to England and ask if it is true. I had to

go along to see if the men were kind to the oxen. Some are, but one was downright mean to a poor ox that limped and it turned out that it had got a piece of glass in its foot, but the man kept on lamming it with his whip, But then I lost all control of myself, you know how I get, and I tore the whip away from him and you may be sure I gave it to him right in his face, the dirty dog! Of course he tried to strike back, but the others would not let him, and finally we became friends. They have to have sticks along to lean on

when they go back without any oxen; but I would like to know if they lean on the whips too?

Do you know where they are all sleeping? In the straw in the barn. I wanted to do that too, but the innkeepers wife said I must be sure to come into the spare room for when they have had something to drink they often start to fight and stab each other with knives. They have all given me their big word of honor never in their lives to kick an ox or beat it when it is lame or twist its tail. In return I had to draw pictures of all of them, to take back to their

wives and three of them are going to have the pictures framed and hang them on the wall. But now listen. The innkeeper has an old, I think great grandfather or something, who remembers everything from very old times and then it was different you may be sure! There would come droves of oxen to the inn every Sunday or Monday and there was such a racket that it was enough to make you crazy. The drivers slept in the barns and can you imagine there were at least four hundred of them! I don't mean oxen but drivers! ! ! ! And each of them had fifty or sixty oxen to take care of. The oxen slept in the heath and the drivers drove out to them with fodder, but I cannot figure out how many oxen there were, won't you please do that? And you know the road was like a big swamp all the way, and often the oxen got stuck and had to be hauled out with ropes. I suppose all the rumpus made the inn so shabby looking, don't you? It looks as if the walls were going to tumble down some day, it really does. In those days the squires came along, for the oxen belonged to the squires, the peasants were only something like slaves. The squire had all the silver ducats about his waist in a *cat* (it wasn't a real cat but that was the name for a purse). But the

squire was so terribly rich and so heavy that what do you think? Sometimes he was so heavy of his own self and from all the silver ducats that a horse was worn out in two years from carrying him and sometimes he was too heavy to ride horseback and had to come in a carriage. And then he would have the horses run at such a mad pace that when he wanted them to stop the hired men had to grab them by their noses (which is a mean shame) but it had to be done or the horses would have dropped dead. In those days the drivers had nasty iron hooks to prod the oxen with, but fortunately that has been forbidden by the police. That is something to be thankful for. But Daddy if you only knew how everything here smells of cattle, the road and one's clothes and the food. And when the squires had eaten and drunk and played cards and sworn and cussed all evening, what do you think? then they sang a *hymn* and wept, and then they cussed some more and went to bed. But oxen are funny, they don't give milk like cows and they are not bulls either, but they are fine to eat. Daddy I'll work so hard at scool when I get home and Ill never be late or jump out of the window when they tell me to leave the room. But then you must not be an-

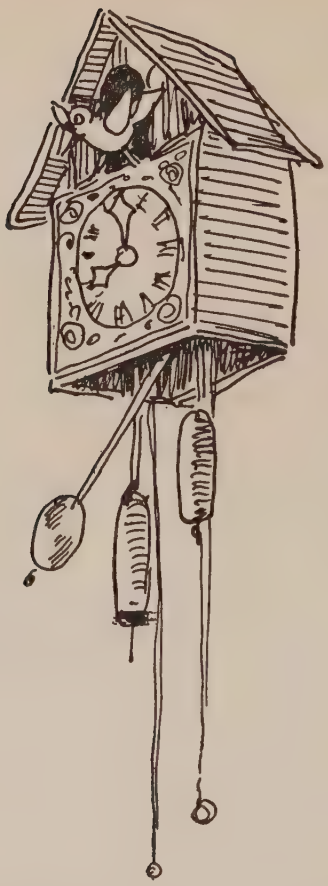
gry because I am going to stay away a little longer. The oxen are also fine at pulling wagons like horses, but of course they cannot run so fast. I think I must have picked more than a thousand ticks off the oxen and I have got a sore finger from it and cannot draw many pictures. But I can remember it all till I am at home. What do you think the drivers used to wear? Blue jackets and white stockings of thick thick wool, as stiff as a board. And over their jackets they wore—guess what! A rain dress! Imagine! It was oilpainted like a painting and reached to the ground. But when the rain stopped they rolled it up round their necks, and that must have looked funny, mustnt it? I am very sorry school has begun but my such stories as the drivers can tell! And they insist that there are ghosts. Do you know when the ghosts appear? When you have killed a man and buried his money a ghost will be walking around until the murderer is caught. I cannot understand where I got so many flees. For I have never heard that oxen had flees, have you? And remember to make up a good story to tell Miss Fagerlund for she is probably furious your own BIBI.

CHAPTER IX

THE WATCHMAKER AND HIS HOME

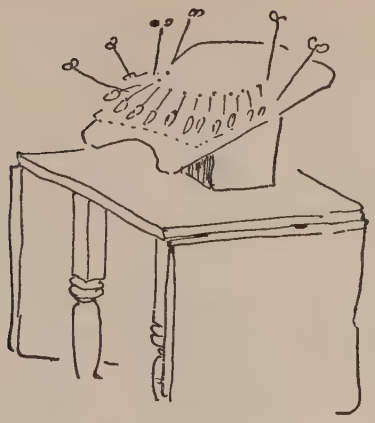
IT MAY be very pleasant to go along with a drove of cattle and twelve drivers, to arrive at an inn and hear many strange stories; but in the long run you tire even of that. When Bibi walked in front of the oxen she naturally could not see them, and when she walked right in their midst she could see nothing at all, but only heard the drivers scold and swear because the oxen did not walk fast enough. And after a while she really had enough of the nice smell which, you will remember, had made her follow the oxen. So, when they approached the old town Tönder, right near the North Sea, she said good-bye to the oxen and their drivers and went into the town, where she had a friend.

Tönder is very, very old, and has only one street that counts. All the houses are quite small, and different from the houses in other Danish towns. When first you see the town, you want to hug it and say,



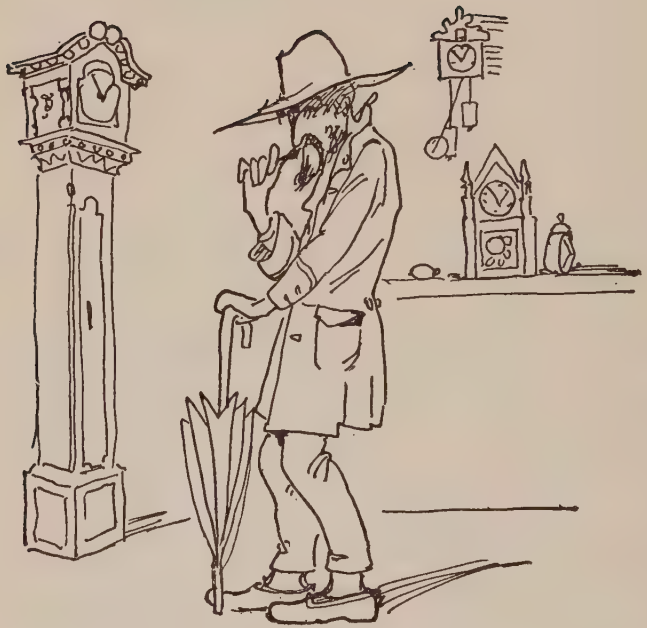
"I will stay here all my life," And if you listen quietly you will hear "West Bow-Wow," as the

THE OLD TOWN TÖNDER



North Sea is called here, growling softly day and night.

Do you know what the Tönder women produce? The fine precious Tönder lace, which is as thin as a spiderweb. Bibi's friend was a watchmaker whose wife made the very finest lace that is found nowadays; but, of course, that is nothing compared to the lace made by her great-grandmother more than a hundred years ago. Bibi had met the watchmaker at a county fair where he sold little wooden clocks, something like the Harz cuckoo clocks. Do you know the cuckoo? It is a bird that says, "Cuckoo, cuckoo!" When a Dane hears it call in the woods, he generally



BIBI'S WATCHMAKER

asks, "How many years shall I still live?" If it cries "Cuckoo" fifteen times, he is going to live fifteen years; if it cries a hundred times, he will live a hundred years, but if it cries Cuckoo only once, he is *not* going to die in a year, but it only stops because it is hungry and tired of sitting there crying "Cuckoo!"

Bibi's watchmaker did not make cuckoo clocks, but in his clocks there were a man and a woman who prophesied the weather. Of course, Bibi made her father buy one of the clocks, and, sure enough, sometimes the woman with the parasol came out when good weather set in, and the man came out with his umbrella and rubbers when it turned rainy. The watchmaker had invited her to visit his lacemaking wife if ever she came to Tönder, and here she was! It was easy enough to find him, for he was the only watchmaker in the town. My goodness, how neat his place was! As neat as a pin. Bibi was allowed to touch everything, even the tiny wheels that set watches a-going, as big wheels set carriages a-going. The wife wore a black headdress, which looked very mournful; and it took her a whole day to make *half an inch of lace!* Her grandmother had worked from

morning till night at a bridal veil for something like *fifty years;* it was for a queen from England or Russia or somewhere. The wife told Bibi that the women who made black lace had to do it lying on their stomachs on the floor; otherwise they became blind.

The watchmaker had a garden with the strangest tree imaginable. It looked so uncanny that you turned away from it quickly; but after a little while you simply had to look at it again. Imagine a tree with hardly any leaves, but covered from top to bottom with cobwebs, thicker and dustier than any you ever saw! And all the bugs that ordinarily go to bite holes in leaves and kill the trees crawled round on all the dry branches and twigs—larvæ and moths and earwigs and worms and all the others. But this tree did not die, but went on living; every year it put forth new strange leaves, and when they had unfolded they were sought by spiders and insects and larvæ. Therefore the watchmaker's garden was the most beautiful in all Tönder, and perhaps in all the world; for none of the other trees had curled-up or spotted leaves, or leaves with holes in them. That was all due to that one tree. Bibi grew very fond of the poor tree which guarded all the others so faithfully. It was not

THE STRANGEST TREE IMAGINABLE

a bit envious either, no matter how homely it was. Bibi went over and stroked its ugly trunk. She would never forget Tönder on account of that tree.

She spent the night in the watchmaker's house, which was the funniest she had ever seen. From the first room, two or three steps led down to the second, and from the second, perhaps three or four up to the third. No two rooms were at a level. If you didn't look out, you fell on your nose, either upward or downward.

The watchmaker was going to Romö on an errand: for he took care of the clocks over there, and as there was going to be a christening, all the old clocks had to be looked over thoroughly. Bibi pricked up her ears. Romö? Why, that was where Else Prest lived! Bibi would have to go along. But it probably would not do to tell the watchmaker right out *why* she wanted to go to Romö; for then, perhaps, he would tell Else Prest to send her home in a hurry. However, she managed to go along, sitting in front on the wagon board, while the rear of the wagon was loaded with a great many big clock cases and an old spinning wheel which had been repaired. They drove through the Marsh, which is the name for the fine rich soil in that part of the country, and after a while came to the

North Sea. How Bibi sniffed and looked around! She wanted to take in the whole stretch of water at once. But the boat was waiting, and Bibi and the watchmaker and the clock cases and the spinning wheel were taken on board; the sails were hoisted and the boat dashed away like lightning, right out into the ocean over the places where the islands had been swallowed by the sea. It was tremendously interesting. Bibi peered down, hoping to discover the top of a steeple or the wing of a mill; but although she could see through the clear water 'way down to the bottom, she detected only rippled sand with seaweed, shells, fishes, and crabs. It hardly took them more than a minute to reach Romö. Bibi's heart just thumped inside of her, naturally. For if she was lucky she was now going to see Else Prest who had been her mamma's nurse when her mamma was a little girl. Else Prest would be sure to know a lot about Mamma which Bibi didn't know at all. That would be a little like getting Mamma back to life, wouldn't it?

Bibi took leave of the watchmaker as nicely as she knew how, thanking him for his hospitality and the drive and the sail and the tree in the garden and

everything, and telling him that she was going another way now, for she knew somebody on the island. Who was that? That was a secret, she said, and went off.

Now, I think I had better let Bibi herself tell about her experiences on Romö, even if she had the bad habit of jumbling up her words and spelling them wrong when she was excited. She knew how to spell almost every word when she took time to think. But it is the hardest thing in this world to think before making blunders, isn't it?

CHAPTER X

ELSE PREST

Dear sweet Daddy:

I'll give you my paintbox if you can guess where I am. For I am with—Else Prest! Isn't that lovely? I think it is almost like being in heaven to learn so much about my mamma. And I am afraid I am going to stay here a long time, for you cannot learn Else Prest by heart in a jiffy. It was not windy at all when we sailed over here for Romö is an island and there is nothing here but white sand and lyme-grass which is long and coarse and cuts your legs but is all right for the sheep to eat when they have nothing else. Daddy now listen to how I found Else Prest. I walked to Tönder with the oxen, and from there I came over here with the watchmaker and

began to look through the windows of every single house. Things are so nice and neat here that I have never seen the like and my skechbook is so full that it is almost bursting and I am always drawing pictures of whatever I see. You can see what sweet little houses there are, cant you? They are even sweeter inside and there is no dust at all for the sea doesn't give dust and the sand doesnt either. But then I came to a place where there was an apple tree reaching way up to heaven and under it lay a tiny bit of a house with a white fence around it and generally sand isnt good for apple trees but this one grew well enough and was bulging with apples. That is where I am going I thought and I sneaked over and lifted the latch for here they have latches on the doors and I went into a room with the cutest alcove and the floor was so clean one could have eaten off it, so I pulled off my shoes. The door to the kitchen was half open and there were three women eating at the kitchen table all in a row, like the three yellow dogs of Mr. Worms that ate each out of its own bowl. But then I tried another door and came into another room. And do you know Daddy—on the wall there was a little picture of a little girl—and that little girl was—was

my mamma, and here I am crying again—and right away I knew that this was Else Prest's house. But I could not look away from Mamma on the wall, and you dont have that picture at all. She looks and looks at me and wears a dress that stands out all round her. I had quite made up my mind to take the picture for it is *my* mamma, and I was going to hurry away with it but then I happened to remember that Else Prest was also fond of Mamma and so I didnt take it. It was boiling hot in there and I was very thirsty and imagine I went to sleep, probably I was tired from sailing and having had nothing to eat. But

just when I opened my eyes she screamed terribly as if she had seen a ghost and the ghost was I. I should never have known her for she was married for many years and is a widow now and is not so very young any more. First she thought she was dreaming or perhaps in Heaven and saw Mamma there. For Mamma looked exactly like me and do you know Daddy Mamma was *just as bad* tearing her clothes! But then she began to touch me and take hold of my arms and legs and feel of my hair and pull off my red cap and then of course my hair tumbled down my back. And that was when she screamed, for Mamma's hair was just like that. And just think she said that now she was willing to die for she had loved my Mamma even more than she loved her own daughter! And I am the image of my Mamma, only I am not so pretty, sad to say. And when she saw I had worn out the heels of both stockings she was so happy that she kneeled on the floor and kissed my feet through the holes. But you may be sure there are no holes any more. They are not in the habit of going around with holes here and I dont think anybody is ever dirty or loses a button. And I dont think they ever need to polish their windows. Next summer I am going to

spend the whole vacation with Else Prest and I am sorry she hasnt a boy because I should have liked to marry him so as to live always in this house. We eat out of the frying pan which is of copper and has three legs and shines like a mirror. Else Prest sits on my bed holding my hands tight and telling me about Mamma until I go to sleep. I am not quite so refined as Mamma, I suppose because I haven't that hateful count for a father. That must be the reason. But do you know Daddy Else Prest says they are not hateful at all but I know they are, I just know it. And she told me that my Mamma also used to run away a little and do you know what they called her when she was a little girl? In the whole neiborhood they called her nothing but *the little Tramp!* What do you think of that? And she could whistle like all the birds in the park and when she went down to the moat with her white basket the fish came hurrying like sixty, for they knew that she was going to give them something nice to eat. And the horses and cows and sheep and I think the pigs—well I am not sure about the pigs, but all the other animals were her friends and she loved them and Else Prest says that when Mamma woke up in the morning the whole windowsill was full

of birds waiting for her and they flew around in her room—and just think at night she went up in the knights' hall—no I mean in the evening—and spread crumbs for the mice for there were lots of them, and knights' hall was not being used any more. But the tower was chockfull of bats. And listen it is something so awful that Else Prest cried again when

telling me about it. Once Mamma went up there for she wanted to make friends with the bats too and she was sitting as quiet as a mouse and the bats were flying all around her, you know they are blind but they can sniff and so don't get hurt. But Mamma's hair was standing out round her head, and one of the bats got tangled up in it with one wing and do you know what happened? I can hardly tell it for it hurts me so—then—then Mamma ran down all the stairs screaming and crying and the poor bat couldn't help it for it was blind. When at last she came down to Else Prest they had to—they had to cut all her hair off, and inside was the bat and it had *died with fright!* Did you know that? But fortunately her hair grew out again very quickly. I don't think she ever went up to the bats again, do you? But now I am going visiting with Else Prest and perhaps I will write more soon your own dear BIBI.

DEAR DADDY:

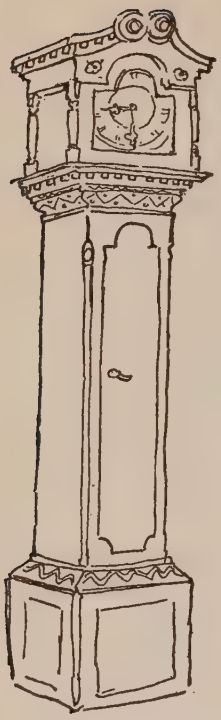
I have seen something which I am sure you have never seen in your life. I have been at a christening in the house where the watchmaker had to go and fix the clocks. It is the house of the very richest man on the

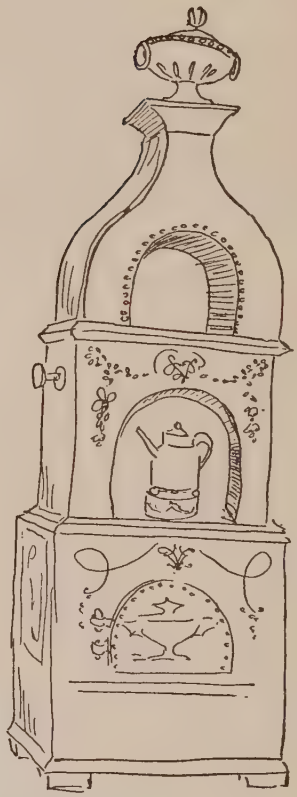
ELSE PREST

island. But he didnt build it himself, another man did that. And that other man came to Romö many many years ago and nobody knew who he was. I think he must have been a *King*, don't you? For there was a crown on all his clothes and everything else even on the *stoves* which are very beautiful and quite different from ours. The man that lives here now doesnt know either who that other man was. The christening was lovely. The baby was quite ordinary, but the christening dress was like pure silver but still transparent and so thin, so thin. I havent any silver in my paintbox, but another time when I get some I

shall paint it on. The secret man came to Romö on a big big ship loaded with the finest things probably from his kingdom or perhaps he was one of those emmygrants who ran away from France when they had their revolution. But I must tell you how the house was, for I dont think the King of Denmark has a castle half as fine. All the walls in the whole house are of china way down to the floors, and all the china is in squares, looking like paintings and the ceilings are paintings and the closets are paintings and everything is either paintings or plain china. Oh I remem-

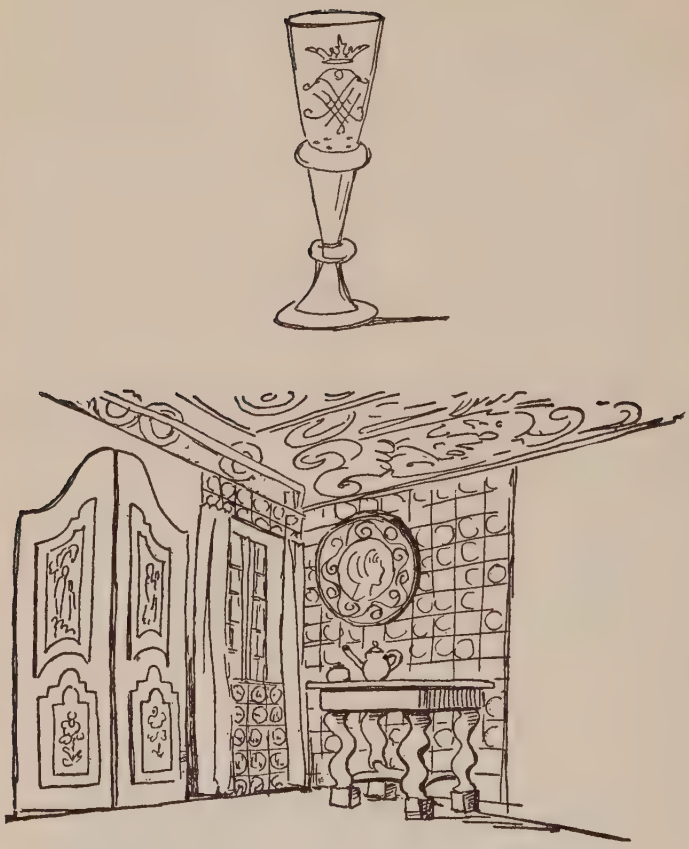
I WOULD LIKE TO SKETCH IT ALL





BUT THAT WOULD TAKE
MORE THAN A HUNDRED
SKETCH-BOOKS

ber now what the squares are called—they are called tiles like the old tile table in the hall but much finer and bigger. Here are some of the rooms and this is the *clock* and a lot of trinkets and buckles and breast-pins. I wish I had as many fingers to draw pictures with as the centipede, but no it has only feet and that would do me no good. I would like to sketch it all but that would take more than a hundred sketch-books, at least. And do you know Daddy his daughter is still living but she doesnt even know *who her father was and where he came from!* Isnt that funny? And the chairs and tables are gilt and you should see the crystal glasses with crowns on them! If you just touch them with your nail they sing. As one imagines the elves to sing, dancing in the night in their little shoes made of dew pearls. And do you know what there is painted on all those tiles? The *whole Bible!* It is the grandest thing I ever saw. But we didnt dance at the christening. Ugh! they were all as sober as death, perhaps because they descend from the secret man. But I do think that if I could live in that house and look at those things all the time I should never run away. The attic is full of boxes, one close beside the other. The lady of the house opened



I AM GOING TO HAVE A HOUSE JUST LIKE IT

them and showed me ever so many things. But when I come again next year I am going to paint all those pictures in the real colors and when some day I get my castle I am going to have a house built just like the one here on Romö! I don't think I shall sleep tonight for thinking of it. You *must* come and see it some day and I say who cares for all those pyramids and all the other trash in Egypt; this house is much more interesting and a thousand times more beautiful. But just the same if I was the secret mans daughter I would write to France and ask them if they dont miss a man that fled when they had revolution. For if his initials are on the glasses and all and his coat of arms and his crown it wouldnt seem so hard to find out whether he was a king or only a count.

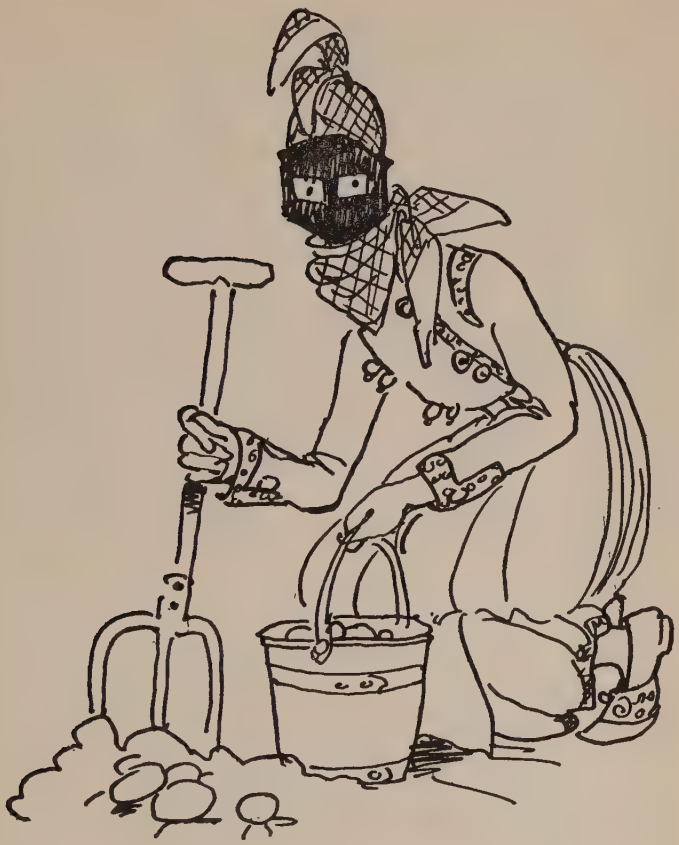
My own Daddy:

Do you know what I did last night? You cannot imagine. Else Prest was as white as a sheet when she came and sat on my bed this morning. For she says I am like a ghost for I walk in my sleep and then—then I draw pictures! I did last night. She did not dare touch me, for that might frighten me to death. Now listen how it was.

Else Prest had gone to bed. She sleeps in one alcove and I in the other and her daughter and the maid sleep in the other room. It was full moon. But all of a sudden I climbed out of my alcove and ran across the room in my bare feet and opened the door wide so that the whole room was filled with the moonlight. And just think, then I went and got my sketch-book and pencil and began drawing pictures out of my head—a lot about the secret man and the christening and my eyes were wide open but *I was asleep inside.* What do you think of that? Isnt it like some kind of a *miracle?* I didnt know that I had drawn pictures or anything. But the pictures were nice enough, rather better than those I generally draw. So that is a good idea, isnt it? But perhaps that is why I was so tired this morning.

My own Daddy:

Pleese excuse that I didnt finish the letter but I thought you would want to know at once that I had walked in my sleep so now I continue. And I have been to a—*wedding!* A real live wedding. Where do you think? You cannot guess, even if I give you three guesses. Dont get frightened at the woman with the



mask, she isnt a murderer but that is what they all wear both men and women when they are harvesting

here on Fanö. Fanö is another island. You know its the home of the Fanö girls with the funny kerchiefs in the picture in the dining room. They wear masks when they work in the fields so as not to get freckled. Before the wedding I went down to the shore and found a great big piece of *amber!* Do you know where amber comes from? It is nothing but resin which came out of Christmas trees many many thousand years ago. Inside of my piece of amber you can plainly see a *fly* with legs and wings and a small fern leaf. Else Prest went with me to the amber grinder who is going to make bears for me and a cigar holder for my own Daddy out of it. You will pay the bill, wont you pleese? Another man here told me that about the resin, he knows everything for he is the schoolteacher.

But now about the wedding. First a man came for us, he wore a *high hat* as if he were going to a funeral. We sailed to Fanö with him. I have never seen the church at home so nicely decorated as the church on Fanö. All the pews were wound with field flowers and real flowers that looked as if they were growing there. And there were *two rows* of candles burning down the aisle although it was broad daylight. The bride didnt wear a white dress or a black one like

poor people, but a *red* one and no silver buttons but great big buckles on her shoes. On her head she had the thing I have tried so hard to draw for you, it is called a *bride's cap*. Isnt it cute? With all those artificial roses and in the back of it there is a real mirror, but over the mirror there is kind of a cobweb of beads. The bride was followed by six bridesmaids. They all looked so forlorn and sad as if they were

going to be hung or taken to prison for stealing. They were grown up and all of them wore *red dresses* with *white aprons* and *silver buttons*. The bride is not allowed to look in a mirror. But do you know what she does? She gets a bucket of water and looks into that to see if she is all right! The bridegroom was all in black with big silver buttons, and silver buckles on

his shoes. And they had to kneel at the altar. The minister asked them something and they answered him and then he laid her hand in his or his in hers and they were married. In that moment the organ began to play again. I think there were more than a hundred people in the church, and it was so still

one could have heard a fly wipe its nose with its leg.

Then the bride and groom marched down the aisle between the candles and it was easy to see they were very sorry to be married, but then why did they do it when the minister asked them beforehand? We had musicians along to the church but they played so mournfully and sadly, but on the way back they played polkas and twosteps and reels, just like the merry-go-round at home on Saturdays. We had the horses run at full gallop but they were fat and shiny and the drivers only cracked their whips in the air so I didn't feel sorry for the horses. Then can you guess where we went? From one farm to the other wherever the guests came from, to get *one spoon* and *one fork* and *one knife* at each place! So I suppose it is customary here to eat only with one's own knife and spoon and fork. For we got only one each place, except where a man and his wife were along, for then we got *two*. That took a long time. I was so hungry and I thought now we were going to have *roast goose* or *chicken* or perhaps *fried sole*. But you cant guess what we had. Do you remember what the washwoman said? She was afraid she was going crazy

from eating split peas every single day. For every place she washed they gave her split peas for that was something easy and hearty and she was feeling sick only from thinking of it. But is *that* food for a wedding? But we also had roast pork with *eight kinds of preserves*. And my stars how they ate! I think the men ate as much as we do in a whole week, I mean each of them did. And coffee and buns. You cant get married on Fanö without having buns with the coffee.

Isnt that little street cute? that is where the amber grinder lives. And Else Prest has given me twelve amber buttons which she cut off her wedding dress.

Thats the way she loves me. She says my castle is as lovely as Paradise. So I would really like to see it some day. If only that high-born crowd would hurry up and get cholera or small-pox or something! Else Prest says they are something she calls *condescending* and that is all right, but they are also terribly *stuck up* because they descend from three hundred years ago. And when Mamma had run away with you that stubborn countess said, "We have no daughter any more." *The wagon in the picture is a hay-wagon when it is

*Bibi forgot to put in the wagon.

THE AMBER GRINDER

full of hay it is taken on board a big barge and sailed to Ribe. I danced with everybody and I have learned such funny dances where the lady is swung round and lifted high up and has to kick while she is hanging in the air, but now I am sleepy. It was night when we came home, but the wedding is going to last two more days. I am longing for Mette and Jens stork and you and the dolls and tell Jensine she *must* remember the hedgehogs with milk. Your own BIBI.

CHAPTER XI

TROUBLE IS BREWING

WHILE Bibi went to a christening at Romö and a wedding at Fanö, found amber on the shore and was told about her mamma by Else Prest, her father received a letter from the principal of the second-best school in the town. Why do you think it was only the second-best? Why, because Bibi had already been expelled from the best one. The letter was addressed to:

STATION MASTER STENSEN,
City.

DEAR SIR:

To my great regret I must ask you to take Bibi out of our school at once, to relieve us of the painful necessity of expelling her. This consideration on our part is shown solely for the sake of Bibi's mother, *née* Countess Huitfeld, who, if she had been living,

would assuredly have put a stop to Bibi's doings of which her father seems to approve.

In the following, I shall give my reasons for this step, which has been taken with the acquiescence of the entire faculty except Mr. Bertelsen, the drawing teacher, who claims that Bibi is unusually gifted in his subject.

During the last month, Bibi has been guilty of the following grave offences: She has jumped out of the hall window no less than *eleven* times, on being sent out of class because of laziness or inattention. Of these eleven times, she returned to school only twice. During the few days when she spent the appointed five hours at school, she has incessantly given occasion for disturbances. Thus, she once paid a hand-organ man to play in the school yard for three successive hours, *admitting herself* to have extracted the necessary money from her savings bank with a knitting needle. We had to call the police to drive the man away. Although being sternly forbidden to do so, she hardly arrives at school any day without bringing some animal: a tame magpie, a goat, a turtle, a mangy cat, a dirty cur with bandaged head, etc. Furthermore, she has sketched the entire faculty in

a way contrary to all ideas of respect, and has drawn these sketches in the main records of the school, which records are later to be deposited in the archives of the diocese. With her penknife, she has carved heads on seven of the pegs in the hall, later furnishing them with faces which in an offensive way caricature her teachers of both sexes.

In spite of great intelligence, she often arrives completely unprepared. She is capable of almost perfect Danish; but her themes and dictations abound in faults of which any six-year-old child would be ashamed.

She shows neither shame nor repentance of her ignorance about the most common questions, for instance, the date of the discovery of America, the sources of the Danube, the number of the Minor Prophets, etc.

While I shall not accuse Bibi of lying, nevertheless she often is very far from telling the truth. Thus she has told her schoolmates that she is going to inherit a castle with twelve hundred rooms, that she can fly if she wants to, and that she is going to swim to England. It has been proved by witnesses that Bibi and a crowd of mere street children have played "Catch

your Partner" in—the church itself, which happened to be open. With my own eyes I have seen her gallop through the streets astride and bareback on a dray horse; I only mention this as an example of her complete lack of delicacy and knowledge of standards for a child belonging to good society. Besides all this, she has gone so far as to lay hands on the property of others, having forcefully opened not less than six rabbits' cages in the fields, thus causing the rabbits to escape and do great damage.

It was my intention to give you the choice between taking Bibi out of school and giving her such a corporal punishment that she would behave herself in the future. She has respect for nothing except possibly a whipping, with which she probably is not yet acquainted. However, as she has not yet deigned to appear at school, although the term began six days ago, even my patience is at an end.

With sincerest regret

SOPHIE FAGERLUND,
Principal.

When he had read this letter, Bibi's father lit a good cigar and sat thinking for a long time. Then he wrote the following:

Miss Sophie Fagerlund,
Principal.
Dear Madam:

Complying with your wishes, I have decided to take my daughter Bibi out of your school, counting from the beginning of this term.

Respectfully,
Bibi's Father.

Whereupon he smiled, finished his cigar, and reread Bibi's last letters. He fully realized Bibi's many shortcomings; but he also knew that, in spite of all this, she was a good little girl; and this fact outweighed all the rest.

But the same evening he received another letter, upon which he reflected for a long time before answering it.

KLINTEBORG.

MR. HELGE STENSEN,
Station Master.

For the second time chance has made us meet our grandchild, whom we found in an unspeakably tattered, dirty, and uncurbed condition, and who, except for our energetic intervention, would have been dragged to the police station by the authorities. Is it really with your knowledge and consent that Ulrikke Elisabeth tramps around with all kinds of vagabonds and other rabble? Do you know that she uses words and expressions which otherwise are only heard from the lips of stable boys? Was it with your consent that she rejected the name with which she was christened? Nine years ago, when it was our greatest wish to adopt the two-year-old, motherless child of our unhappy daughter, we intended to give her the educa-

KLINTEBORG

tion suitable for the heir of Klinteborg. You refused to give her up. What are the results? You cannot be surprised that we have sought and received information revealing the most unbelievable facts. Thus we know that she is constantly neglecting her school, that the bad example she sets to others caused her to be expelled from her first school, and that parents object to having their children play with her. But that is not all. She has been seen keeping company with a gang of depraved, drunken ox drivers, spending the nights in the barns of country inns. All this in an age when other little girls are playing with dolls!

In spite of all, Ulrikke Elisabeth is so full of charm and intelligence that one must be fond of her. And the Countess and I both think that, after all, there is still hope for her, provided she is placed under vigilant guidance at once.

If, therefore, you give over the little girl to us immediately, you will do your duty to her, and at the same time somewhat make redress for the grief and shame which you brought over our heads in enticing our unhappy daughter to marry you.

Ulrikke Elisabeth, as her name is and will continue to be, has no idea who we are, and that she has met

her grandparents. We would ask you not to enlighten her on this point, but state as your own wish that she take up her abode with us from now on. We shall not refuse her our permission to see her father now and then, but would consider it advisable for her neither to see nor write you for a few years.

If you should again refuse to comply with our wish, we intend to disinherit her in our will.

Respectfully,

JOACKIM, COUNT HUITFELD.

At first, the reading of this letter made Bibi's father quite pale. Then the blood rose into his cheeks, 'way up to his forehead. He clenched his fists and stared straight ahead, frowning deeply. Then he arose and went into the room containing all the belongings of Bibi's mother. There were flowers in all the vases, and not a speck of dust anywhere. He opened a beautifully inlaid rosewood secretary, and took out a package of letters, written by Bibi's mother. He untied the ribbon that held them together and began to read them. Two tears stole down his cheeks; still he smiled. The smile remained. Softly he tied the letters together again, put them back into

the little secretary, and went back to his den, walking proudly, with his head high.

He sat down at his desk and wrote the following:

COUNT JOACKIM HUITFELD,
KLINTEBORG.

Permit me first to protest emphatically against the word "unhappy" used in connection with my deceased wife. Her last gesture was a caress, and she died smiling. I have never seen a sad expression in her beautiful eyes. We were both perfectly happy in the few years of our married life. I know that a marriage between nobility and bourgeoisie is looked upon as a misalliance in certain circles. But I do not admit to you or anybody else that Ulrikke Elisabeth lowered herself in becoming my wife. However, enough about that.

I do not think the person exists who could prevent Bibi from following the inclination for tramping with which she seems to have been born. She began to run away before she could speak plainly. At first I worried greatly about her; but I am more reconciled to this trait of hers now. She and I are friends; she tells me everything. I trust her, and we understand each other.

Not only has Bibi been expelled from her first school, as mentioned in your letter, but lately also from her second. I now shall give her the choice between going to Klinteborg, for perhaps a year, and being sent to a boarding school in Switzerland.

She acquired the name of Bibi by trading names with a friend, and I advise you not to call her anything else. You will soon see that she will stand neither threats nor compulsion.

When she reaches a more mature age, it will depend on herself whether she will accept an inheritance from those who turned against her mother or relinquish all claims on them.

If she goes to Klinteborg, she will write me as many or as few letters as her heart dictates to her; it goes without saying that I shall insist on my right to answer them whenever it seems best to me. She has not yet returned from her latest unusually long "excursion," but I know her to be in good hands, and expect to see her here in the next few days. I shall inform you about her choice as soon as she has decided.

Respectfully,
Helge Stensen.

CHAPTER XII

HOUSES ON TIPTOE, AND A MUSICAL COW

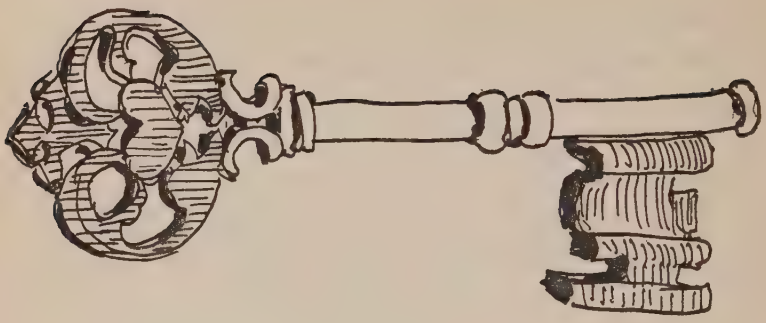
DEAR DADDY:

I am like a drawer that is too brimfull to be closed. I tell you I have been around and have seen so many things that there cant be much left in this world for me to see. The man in the grand house with crowns on everything and china walls everywhere gave me an amber heart which I wear on a velvet ribbon round my neck. And do you know when you hold a hair

near it the hair gives a little jump and sticks to the heart! Like those horse shoes that are so magnetic that they snatch at any pen or needle near them. I have also been given a *Fanö kerchief*, and wherever you show it in this world people will know you are from Fanö. And a dried *sea urchin* which lives in the water when alive, but mine is *dead*. And a *sewing box with shells on the lid*, like those you see at the county fairs, which the sailors bring home from southern countries. The schoolteecher also sketches, isn't that nice? He gave me a whole lot of sketch books not very grand but good enouf and they are all packed as full as I am. I have colored many of the pictures for that looks so nice. Also a *carved cow's horn* which is a flower vase. And a *cowbell*. I love that. For when I tinkle it it sounds exacly like the heather with sunlight and blue butterflies. And I have a *smoked eel* thicker than my arm for I measured round its waist with a woolen thread. Who do you think is going to have that all by himself? my own Daddy. For it does *not* hurt the eel to be smoked for it is already dead. Otherwise I would not eat it.

But listen to all the places I have been with somebody who knows Else Prest. Whose name is Tham

Thamsen. First I was in Mögeltönder. It is so nice and pretty there that I am sure a castle cannot be nicer, not even my own castle. It is like a village but all the houses are built together in two long rows opposite each other the way you stand when you dance Francaise and they are exacly alike and each house has kind of a glass box or glass case in front. One can sit there and see what all the others are doing. The houses are red and not very big but the trees are so big that I have never seen any bigger. And the church is at least as big as a *pyramid*. And



the peasants in Mögeltönder are so very very rich that they dont know what to do with all their money. And do you know what they did in the olden times? they had their chained dogs wear collars of *pure gold !* but I think it would have been nicer if they had set the dogs free! Inside the houses all the walls are blue, the color of blueing, and there are lots of kettles and pots and pans of copper and six geraniums in each window. No other flowers but only geraniums which are awfully cute. And lots of chests and cupboards all painted with roses and wreaths and carved and with keys twice as big as my foot or anyway nearly that. In every house they gave me preserves on a tray, always many different kinds, and a glass with teaspoons so that I could dip my spoon in the water

after each mouthful. And zwieback. They are so rich because the soil here is marsh and it is the richest soil in the world. It is just as rich as the soil round the Nile in Egypt. So there are no end of cows and sheep, many many thousand. But in the church I saw something I never saw before it is called *frescoes* and that is the way they used to paint formerly. It is so pretty but not with strong colors, but do you know Daddy the way it looks when we take a walk and the fog comes up and the town and all the houses are kind of indistinct but we can see them anyway. Thats the way it is.

Afterwards when I knew Mögeltönder by heart they took me out in the marsh to visit I think it was Tham Thamsen's sister who is married to a man out there. And they live in—in a house *without windows !* Really, without windows! Still it was not pitch dark, for there were round portholes like the ones they have on ships, which are called *ox-eyes*. I certainly had to think of Robinson Crusoe, the way they build their farms in the marsh! Each farm is on kind of a little island by itself, not in the water but in the marsh. It is this way: first they dig a lot of ditches. That is called draining. They do that to make the water run

off. And the soil that is dug out is heaped up and on top of that they build a farmhouse. Not a living-house and a barn and a stable and outhouses round a big yard the way we do, for there isn't room for all that; but the roof is awfully steep so that the hay can be stored in the attic; it looks as if the house stood on tiptoe. In fall they have big floods from the North Sea and all the low country is covered with water and people can only visit each other in boats; that often lasts for many weeks. It would be fun to live there, wouldnt it? But in spring when the grain ought to come up in the fields they cant have all that water covering up things, so then all the mills begin to go

And do you know what they grind? *Not* flour but *water!* They grind all the water back into the North Sea!

I have also been out to see the *dikes*. They are long banks of earth which have been built along the sea to prevent the whole marsh from being washed away, as the islands were when they had the big spring flood I told you about. On the dikes there are also farms with terribly rich peasants. All the peasants here are so neat and clean, and as *dignified* as the minister's wife at home. It certainly wouldn't do to laugh aloud in their rooms.

Did you remember to take Mette out for a walk?

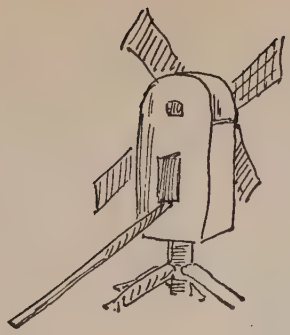
If you buy liver again for the cat in Kortsen's yard you will get it cheapest in the pork-butchery, especially if you say you come from Bibi; they are also good to cats. But you never saw the like of what I saw the other day on Romö. Someone had promised to show me something and I was going over there when I heard an accordion; but I couldnt see where it was. There was a cow standing in the grass, it was nice and fat, and as shiny as silk. But imagine, at a little distance I saw a woman sitting on the ground, playing all kinds of dance tunes on the accordion. No not all kinds for the cow did not like the very quick ones; but it loved waltzes. Of course I asked her why she was sitting there playing, and she said she had only that one cow and her husband had drowned and she had no children. And when she played the accordion the cow gave more milk than any of the other cows on Romö, just as much as the cows in the marsh. At first I thought she was a little crazy. Not very much but just a little, but she wasnt. For Else Prest said her cow gave a *whole quart* more milk than any other cow on the whole island, just because it was always kept cheerful. But if some day she hadnt time or forgot to play it gave *two quarts less*. I am going to

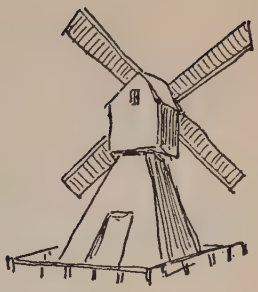
try to make all the farmers I know do that to their cows. But Else Prest says it is wrong to do that for that is to tempt the Lord. For a cow is a cow and a man is a man. And an accordion is meant for men and

not for cows. Still I like the woman who played for her cow.

I know *four* different kinds of mills now. But I like our own mill on the dike at home best of all. I have been inside many of the mills and they always smell of flour and mice. But I dont understand why the mice that eat the white flour in the mills are gray, when there are other mice that are white. That is strange. Your own BIBI.

Now I am only going to Skanderborg, for the minister's wife from there was at the wedding on Fanö and invited me and she has a daughter my age and you like parsonages, dont you?





I KNOW FOUR DIFFERENT KINDS OF MILLS

CHAPTER XIII

FRYING PAN OR FIRE?

THE gray people would certainly not have recognized the neat little girl who jumped out of a first-class compartment. She was tidy and clean, wearing newly tarred wooden shoes—a gift from a

man on Fanö—and a brand-new Romö costume, a gift from Else Prest. She was struggling with an enormous knapsack, given her by another woman on Romö and showing a church, a mill, a stag, five ducklings in a pool of water, and a hunter carrying his gun —all in many-colored cross-stitch embroidery.

Bibi rushed across the platform and into the office. Before her father had had time to look up, she had thrown her arms round him and was talking a blue streak, now into his right, now into his left ear. Once or twice he tried to get a word in edgewise, but it was simply impossible. Bibi was like a burst water pipe from which the water streams all over the street before one realizes it. She jumped up on the desk, pushing books and papers aside; she dangled her legs with her new wooden shoes, and talked, talked, talked. In the midst of her whirl of words, she jumped down to show one of the dances she had learned at the wedding. Then she whispered about her mamma's grave, and kissed her Daddy's ear because he had not been down to see it this year. She whisked out of the door, to return after a little while with Jens stork in her arms, a cat purring on one shoulder, and the tame magpie on the other, and

Mette trotting at her heels. "Daddy, Daddy, he knew me right away!"

"Who knew you?"

"Jens stork! Hurrah!"

Bibi opened her knapsack, displayed all her treasures, and went on talking. The cat approached stealthily, the magpie stretched over her shoulder. In a twinkling, the cat had seized the delicious smoked eel, and sprang over to a corner of the room with his booty, the magpie after him. Bibi and her father roared with laughter, watching the cat and the magpie pulling at either end of the eel. Finally, Bibi succeeded in saving the remains, as fortunately the eel was thick and the cat only a kitten.

At last Bibi's father said, "Listen, Bibi. I must have a serious talk with you."

"Must you really? Can't you wait until to-morrow or another day? I hate serious talks, and we were just going to have a little fun. Do you know, Daddy, porter Sennels says the gypsies have come again, or else it is another tribe of them!"

Daddy laid his hand over Bibi's mouth. "Don't talk, Bibi, but listen. It is really something very serious. I have had a letter from Miss Fagerlund who——"

Bibi planted a firm kiss on her daddy's mouth. "Don't you mind Miss Fagerlund a bit, I don't either. Not the least bit. Do you know, Daddy, Else Prest never wears shoes in the rooms, only stockings? They all do that."

"Bibi, if you keep on interrupting me, I shall get very angry!"

Bibi snatched her father's watch out of his pocket. "How long is your serious talk going to be? Five minutes?"

"Perhaps more."

Bibi sighed, but suddenly jumped up. "I'll be back in a minute, Daddy." The station master shrugged his shoulders. He was only too well used to Bibi's winning out. But this time he must try to remain firm. Bibi was at last to know that she must bend to a will stronger than her own.

Bibi went out with the whole menagerie, but returned loaded like a pack mule. "Well, Daddy, while you have your serious talk, I am going to mix an eggnog and paste stamps into my album. Assistant Torsen has collected a lot for me. But if your talk takes more than five minutes, we'll play picture lottery while you are talking, won't we?" She looked

at her father. "Do you know, Daddy, I don't blame Mamma for making a messylance with you, for you are the nicest-looking man in the world!"

Bibi's vigorous stirring made the cup jingle. Her father began: "Bibi, you are only eleven and have already been expelled from two schools."

"One, Daddy—one! Don't fib!"

"No, Bibi, two! Miss Fagerlund has expelled you, also!"

"Miss Fa——?" Bibi's jaw drooped, but only for a minute; then a beaming smile spread over her face. "Hurrah!"

"But, Bibi, there are no schools left!"

"Why, yes, Daddy, there is the free school, isn't there, and there they will allow me to wear wooden shoes like the other poor children!"

"Bibi, it is a very serious thing to be expelled from two schools. And it cannot go on this way. It is very necessary for a little girl to learn something."

"Learn something! But I am not expelled for not learning anything. I know it all by heart as soon as I have read it through once. You just ask Miss Fagerlund if I don't often know much more than those dumb old books tell you, about laying cables into the

ocean and the names of the birds and what to give them to eat in winter. But Miss Fagerlund wouldn't believe that it was good to tie a piece of bacon to the trees for the woodpeckers, or that if you have a marten in the house it will see to it that no other martens come around and steal chickens, just as a policeman keeps an eye on thieves and murderers."

"Bibi, do listen to me; I have had a letter from your mother's parents."

Bibi hissed, "Burn that letter quick! Daddy, do burn it quick! We don't want any letters from that crowd! But when I went along with the ox drivers, we met, I think it was a butcher's dog, and do you know how many fleas I caught on it?—you bet it was glad—thirty-two! But, Daddy, now I am expelled, I think I shall go up the Hobro road every morning to watch the people coming with cows or calves, and see that they treat them decently; also, when they go on board the ships, for they are tough, they are. And the policemen stand around doing nothing and say it is none of my business, but it is, anyhow. And if they are not decent to the poor little calves, I am going to write to the King and put in a picture of the way they do to their tails. That is *cruelty to ani-*

mals just as well as the rack and the inquisition in Spain——"

"Bibi, your grandparents want you to live with them on Klinteborg and be educated there!"

Bibi almost flung the eggnog down on the table. "Oh, is that so? But I am not going to be educated by such mean persons who cut my mamma's hand off! Now you know it!"

"I am sure they will treat you well in all respects."

"Daddy, if you say another word about those good-for-nothing——"

"Just one thing, Bibi: you may choose between Klinteborg and a boarding school in Switzerland!"

Bibi jumped up. "Never, Daddy, never! Not even if they sent a golden coach with twenty white elephants for me!"

Bibi stamped her feet and stormed, having a veritable attack of rage. "Perhaps you don't care for me any more! Perhaps you are only trying to get rid of me! Well, then I am going to America or Australia. I can easily get over as a cabin boy if I put on boys' clothes. But that is mean of you. I wouldn't have believed that of you. If Mamma knew that, you bet she would be angry and have a divorce."

"PERHAPS YOU DON'T CARE FOR ME ANY MORE!"

A faint smile showed in her father's eyes and in the corners of his mouth. "Then you would rather go to a boarding school in Switzerland?"

Bibi still panted with excitement, but she thought hard. "Switzerland? That's where the Alps and Mount Everest——"

"No, Bibi, Mount Everest is in India; the Alps are in Switzerland."

"That is what I am saying. Is there perpetual snow on them?"

"There is perpetual snow on Mont Blanc."

"And you get the best chocolate from Switzerland; the gray people gave me a bar, for they had just been there. Will you come and see me every Sunday? For, listen: then we will climb all the mountains, and perhaps we will slide down the Alps into Italy where the Pope is. You have to kiss his big toe—but my, how that must tickle him! And we will go around in gondolas in Venice, the gray people told me about that—and, Daddy—couldn't we slip across the water to Africa and hire a good camel with lots of water in its stomach and ride through the Sahara Desert? Oh, let's, Daddy! Do say yes, Daddy!"

"Hold your horses, Bibi. I am not talking of

Africa or Italy, but of a boarding school in Switzerland."

"Yes, I know; but when I know it by heart and it bores me to death, then——"

"You mean, then, you are going to run away. But you cannot run away from a boarding school, even if you are bored; you will be watched so closely that it will be impossible."

Bibi pouted. "Just you wait and see me run away as much as I want to!"

Her father interrupted the conversation: "The north train is signaling, Bibi. You will have to go now. Then we agree, do we? I shall write to Switzerland about you this evening. I have made inquiries about a good place there."

Bibi left the room very, very slowly. She was thinking so hard that she forgot all about her eggnog.

Bibi's thoughts were as black as the blackest ink. She certainly never would have believed that her own dear daddy would try to get rid of her as quickly as possible. And what had she done? Nothing at all. Only played hooky a tiny bit and traveled to see the world. One ought to do that—what else was the world

for? But how could her daddy for one minute want her to go and live with those abominable people whom she hated and despised; she would much rather be thrown before wild animals, like the Christian martyrs; but, of course, one didn't do that any more. Or be thrown into the lions' den like Daniel—he was one of the Major Prophets. She would get along with those lions all right. If only you looked kind, and talked nicely to them and pulled thorns out of them, or perhaps caught fleas on them—did lions have fleas, she wondered?—But to the Klinteborg crowd? Who perhaps would cut off her hand because she married her husband!—Just the same, she would like to take a look at Klinteborg, of which they were so proud, although it really was hers, since she was her mother's daughter—most likely Switzerland wouldn't be so bad. But there was something about having to be most fearfully well mannered in a boarding school, sitting up straight and only speaking when one was spoken to—and if one couldn't run away one little bit. . . .

If your daddy did not like you any more, you might just as well die right away—especially if you didn't even have a mamma, because she had died

long ago. How she had been longing to return home and tell Daddy everything, taking him, and perhaps Mette and Jens stork, out on the creek in her little white boat, and having supper with them in the boat or in a haystack in the meadows—and here Daddy was going around planning how to get rid of her. . . .

Suddenly, Bibi rushed away, as if the police were at her heels. She ran through the whole house into her own little room. She slammed the door, turned the key, and threw herself on the bed, weeping. Although it could hardly be called weeping. Rather, she shrieked and sobbed, biting the blanket and clenching her fists, grinding her teeth and wishing to cry herself to death; that would serve Daddy right—siding with those high-borns to get rid of her! Why, he was as bad as the gypsies who made a living by stealing children and selling them to the circus people. Maybe she had better go to America as a stowaway and stay there for many, many years, to punish Daddy for not caring for her any more. But what about Mette? Or Jens stork? Or the cat in Kortsen's yard? Or the turtle? Or the tame magpie?

Bibi knew a story about a little girl named Ederland Poultry Girl; she had nothing but a kneading

trough; but she set it into the sea, put up a broomstick as a mast and her apron as a sail, went out in the wide world, and ended by marrying the prince.

Bibi had her own boat in which there was room enough for Mette and the magpie and the turtle and Jens stork and the cat in Kortsen's yard; but the boat was too small to carry them to America, across the ocean with waves as high as Himmelbjerget. But if she drowned, her daddy would be sure to weep bitterly, because it would all be his fault!

She cried as long as she could force one tear out. We all know how it is, don't we? At first we have a splendid cry, the tears come running as quickly as the water from a faucet; but, after a while, we have used up all our tears and have to wait until new tears have been made inside of us; and that may take a long time. Bibi tried and tried, but her tears had gone. Yet she was just as sorry as before. Perhaps she was too sorry to cry. When she saw an animal being treated cruelly, she felt that way: she could not cry, but it hurt her as if somebody pinched her insides with tongs.

All of a sudden, she happened to remember that

Ulla's sister Jette had been in a Swiss boarding school. Ulla's parents were very well bred and had a relative who was in the King's Cabinet or something; that was why their daughter had been sent abroad. Jette would know everything about Switzerland.

Bibi raced down the street, her eyes red and swollen from weeping. She ran directly to Ulla's home. Ulla was there and told her that Miss Fagerlund had been in all the classes and warned the children not to cause their parents as much sorrow as Bibi Stensen did. Bibi banged the table with her fist. "Miss Fagerlund better not say anything about causing your parents sorrow, when you have only one parent!"

Jette was also at home, and Bibi asked her all kinds of questions about Switzerland. Ulla's mother treated them to melon, which was Bibi's favorite fruit; but this time it stuck to her throat as if it were dipped in glue. As soon as possible, she said good-night and many thanks, and hurried through the streets to the remotest part of the park. The faint strains of music from the park concert came to her from one side; on the other side were the two graveyards, the Christian and the Jewish one; but none of the dead, whether Christian or Jew, felt so sad as Bibi. She threw her

arms round one tree trunk after the other, wiping her eyes on the bark and feeling unhappy enough to die of grief. But one does not often die of grief, strange to say. Neither is one killed by choking on a fishbone every time one eats fish, or run down by a carriage every time one walks in the street!

Bibi kept saying to herself, "What am I to do? What am I to do?" We have all said that many times —"What am I to do? What am I to do?" But, when we have said it often enough, something within us will suddenly give us the answer.

Jette had told the most dreadful things about Switzerland. At eight o'clock in the evening the gate to the boarding school was closed with a *thick iron bar!* The windows were out of the question; to protect the pupils from falling out and killing themselves, there was a mechanism about the windows which made it impossible to open them wide enough. When the pupils walked in the streets, they had one teacher before and one behind. You had to sit as straight as a ramrod and were not allowed to eat very much of whatever tasted good, so as not to appear greedy. Think of sitting moping behind that thick iron bar! What was the fun of all the beautiful perpetual snow

and the mountains if you had one teacher before and one behind, and the gate was closed at eight! You might just as well have a bit put in your mouth and a harness on your back and be hitched to a wagon, like the poor miserable horses. . . .

There was a little girl who cried herself to sleep that night.

It happened to be Saturday evening, the only evening which Bibi's father spent regularly away from his home. On Saturday he went to the Club to play billiards. But, this particular evening, he saw Bibi's frightened and excited little face before him all the time while playing; and when he tried to strike the two white ivory balls, he missed them because Bibi's face appeared between them. Finally, he had to say good-night to his partner and go. It seemed terrible to him that in a few days his own little Bibi might be on her way to Switzerland or to the big country estate where every attempt would be made to have her forget him; the thought of it made him stoop like an old man.

When he came home, it was after Bibi's bedtime. He opened the door to her room quietly and tiptoed

in. But when he had lighted the candle and bent over her, his eyes filled with tears and he almost dropped the candle. Bibi's face was swollen with crying, and even while she was sleeping, tears trickled out beneath her eyelids. Her small wooden shoes, which she had dangled so jauntily in his office, stood at the bed with their toes turned in, as if joining in her grief. The fine Romö costume, the little red stockings, and the red cap were thrown all over the floor. He heard a scratching sound—what was that? It came from the bed. He lifted the blanket softly: There lay the turtle, wriggling to get out. Bibi was holding it in her arm, as she had held her doll when she was younger. She had brought the turtle up from the garden to console her in her sorrow!

Bibi's father breathed deeply and heavily. What could he do? A drop of wax fell on Bibi's face and awakened her. She opened her eyes, threw her arms round Daddy's neck, and whispered, "Oh, Daddy, hadn't we better go and commit suicide at once? I am so awfully unhappy!"

The station master had to laugh, which made him shake the candle and pour streams of wax down on Bibi's neck. "Well, Bibi, tell me why you are so un-

happy. Generally you are so glad to go traveling. What is the matter with Switzerland?"

"Daddy, it is that awful gate which they close at eight! And you can't run away or anything. And to have one teacher before and one behind, as if you were a drunken man between two policemen. . . . Oh, Daddy, I wish I was dead!"

The station master realized that he had to get away, for he could not stand this very long. He bent over Bibi to kiss her good-night; but she seized his arm and blew out the candle. "It blinds me, and it is much easier to talk in the dark!"

They began to have a serious talk. . . .

The outcome was a compromise. Bibi was allowed not to make up her mind at once. She was to go to Klinteborg quietly and secretly and look things over. If she liked it, she might consider going there; if not, they might find another boarding school in Switzerland, with a thinner iron bar or a gate which would be kept open a little later than eight in the evening.

CHAPTER XIV

ON THE WAY TO KLINTEBORG

NEXT evening, Bibi went away on the fast train. She was neat and clean, her hair was braided, and brushed until it shone like a pair of brand-new shoes, and she had put on gloves so as to be quite elegant in case she should meet her cruel relatives; she wanted them to think that she was just as well dressed as they.

She would have preferred to take the morning train, so as to see things on the way; but she was too anxious to sit once more in her own garden and her own private little graveyard with Jens stork and the magpie, the turtle and the dolls and with Mette tethered on the lawn; for Mette had nibbled the bark from all the young apple trees, which was a shame.

She was going south, passing many towns. First

came Aarhus. That is a big town with a cathedral and the enormous county fair, at which thousands of people from all Denmark gather so that the town can hardly be recognized. At the fair, there are a great many tents, with gingerbread from Kristiansfeldt,[1] and rose sugar, and there are many merry-go-rounds, and flea theaters, and shooting booths where you can win a whole dining set, if you are lucky. Aarhus has a pretty forest which Bibi had visited often. In Aarhus the streets are in two layers, like houses with two stories; I think there are sometimes even three layers. So when you stand in one street you can spit down on the people who are walking or riding in another street—but, of course, you do not do it!

A little while later, she passed Skanderborg. Skanderborg looks at itself reflected in its lake; it was there that King Volmer was when Queen Dagmar was taken ill in Ribe. Bibi knew Skanderborg by heart; she had sailed on the lake and gone ashore on the island; she had been to the top of the church tower, and had seen a bat hang dormant in a tree in the forest.

[1]Small town in Schleswig, noted for its gingerbread.

It was not so pleasant to pass Horsens; for just outside the town was the *penitentiary* with all the poor convicts. Bibi turned her head the other way; she knew the penitentiary, and had even gone over to feel of it—you can not go inside unless you have committed a crime. But her head turned that way of its own accord. The moonlight fell on the big red building. Bibi thought of all the prisoners who were so much worse off than she; if only she might go and pat them on the shoulder, or give them something nice, or even say something to make them laugh a little. They had an iron bar before their gate all day long—and they were not allowed to walk in the streets, not even with two teachers. I guess they wouldn't mind the teachers if only they could get out. Bibi felt a special pang because of not knowing the fate of her nice viper burglar who taught her the Big Trick; was he still in there, or had he got out? Last Christmas, she had sent him another present and letter, but no answer had come. Perhaps he had died of sorrow; perhaps he had escaped over the wall. . . .

Now came Vejle.[1] Vejle makes you think of the

[1]Pronounce Viley.

sun breaking through the clouds after a pouring rain and being reflected in all the little pools; the birds begin to twitter, the flowers raise their heads on their stems, fresh from the rain; and, oh, how good the leaves smell! You can hear all that from the sound of the name: Vejle! Vejle leaves a good taste in your mouth. And here was Munkebjerget, which has nothing to do with monks but looks like Himmelbjerget, with trees and heather and a view, and down below was Vejle Fiord. But if you went another way you would arrive at Grejsdal,[1] which is warm and sheltered from the wind. There must be about a million butterflies in Grejsdal; but riding through Vejle you cannot see Grejsdal, and, anyway, you could not see the butterflies if you came through at midnight, when they are asleep.

Before she knew it she was in Frederits, which is a very important town; for that is where the train goes on board the ferry and crosses the water to Funen and from Funen to Zealand, straight to Copenhagen. But otherwise there is not much to Frederits—except this, that at any time, day and night, there is a huge long table in the waiting room, packed full of the most

[1]Pronounce Gricedahl.

delicious sandwiches and coffee. All the travelers sit down and eat and drink. The waiters are in one continual rush, with coffee-pot in one hand and sandwich platter in the other.

Bibi was traveling in style, this time. She had two brand-new ten-krone bills along, folded neatly and stuck into a small secret inside pocket, closed by a mother-of-pearl button. Otherwise, we know what would have happened to Bibi and her pocket.

Bibi found a good place at the big table, between two platters with sandwiches and two silver trays with sweet buns. She ordered a cup of coffee, for that keeps you awake, as she was told by a washwoman who began to wash at three o'clock in the morning, when it is still night in winter. But in a corner behind the door she discovered two little ragged and black-faced children, standing hand in hand; she could see with half an eye that they were Poles or Russians or Italians or gypsies. They would be sure not to have any money. So she called to them, but they didn't seem to understand Danish. She ran over and took hold of them—now they understood. Magnificently she ordered two more cups of coffee, and pointed to the platters: "Eat away!" The waiter looked at her;

evidently he thought, "I wonder if that girl has money enough to pay?" So she slipped out a ten-krone bill and played a little with it. The children gobbled up the food. They smacked their lips and slobbered like little pigs that have been been weaned and are beginning to eat from the trough. Meanwhile, Bibi started a letter:

My own Daddy:

Thank goodness I didn't have to say at once where I would rather go and live. For my head was splitting, but now I am going to take a good look at Klinteborg and I am still clean from top to toe for I stayed in First Class all the way and now I am going to put this letter into the north train for I can get stamps from the waiter. I have eaten four sandwiches with eel and scrambled eggs and two children have eaten about ten sandwiches each and two icecreams. All the stars are out and I can hardly wait to go on board the ferry. I think I am going to sit in the train, it must be such fun when all the wagons go on board through the water and you sit and rock in one of them. But if I meet the Klinteborg crowd I am going to tell them what I think of them, you may be sure. I don't think one can help being a vagabond. The Earth keeps on running round the sun too and the stars can't stand still and mope in one spot either. I know everything by heart here in Frederits. But the two children don't understand what I say, they only eat. I wish that school in Switzerland wasn't so dumb for I would love to climb over the Alps. Goodnight in Christ's name Amen your own Bibi.

Daddykins do please remember that I have not given you *my big word of honor* to take the train directly to Klinteborg but I will be very careful not to get dirty on the way. But I have never been on Funen because you wouldn't let me and now there are so many things I simply *have* to see and also where Hans Christian Andersen lived in the little house in Odense. For I just love him and I would like to have someone like that for a grandfather, but then he would have to write me a story every single evening for a hundred years. Here goes the bell goodbye, goodbye.

CHAPTER XV

A CHAPTER THAT MAY BE SKIPPED, BUT IT IS MUCH BETTER TO READ IT

IN OLDEN times, there were four kinds of Danes, just as there are houses of different sizes. They were: Noblemen, clergy, burghers, and peasants.

Let us begin with the peasants. They were not considered much of anything, at least not so much as cattle—goodness, no! When you sold your property, the peasants were naturally included, the way you sometimes trade the case with all your pens and pencils for somebody else's. The peasants were slaves, but not the same way as the Negroes were. Of course, they did not look like the Negroes either, but generally had straw-colored hair and blue eyes. They were not allowed to move away from the place where they were born. They had to toil and moil for the squire who owned them, and when he was angry he would throw them into the "Dog Hole," which certainly

was not nearly so cosy as a dog's house is nowadays. Or he made them "Ride the Wooden Horse." That was a sharp board standing on edge, on which they had to sit astride, with heavy leaden weights tied to their feet to pull them well down. You can imagine how that hurt! Sometimes, when the squire was furiously angry, he had them whipped till they were half killed; that was called flogging, and afterward their skins were all in rags. You think they should have complained to the police? As well might a poor little

gray mouse complain about the cat eating its father and mother. Who would care?

The peasants could neither read nor write; the very smartest could sign a cross for their names; of course, they did not go to school. They lived in the most miserable huts with floors of stamped clay—you know, clay is nothing but heavy, clammy dirt—and they had their pigs and chickens and dogs and cats right in with them; also their cow, if they had one. But the worst of it was that they also had to pay tithes, as it was called, to the Church. No matter how much they toiled, from sunrise till sundown, they remained poor, for the Church came and grabbed every bit they might earn. What was called the church was really the priests (also called the clergy). Of course, the church did not go round that way exacting money or eggs or butter, grain or chickens from people. No, it was the priests who did it. In those days, the priests were very different from what they are now. They did nothing but eat and drink and hoard money. They were so gluttonous, I am surprised they did not burst —perhaps they did once in a while. They were extremely important as they could excommunicate people; that means, they could forbid people to be

buried and go to heaven. All the people were a little afraid of the priests, and tried to be on good terms with them; not only the peasants but also the burghers. The burghers were the common people who lived in the towns—trades-people, merchants, and the authorities. They ranked somewhere between the peasants and the priests, but nearer the priests, for the peasants were way below all the others. Perhaps you have heard about the thralls of still older times; they may have been still worse off, but not much. The burghers were immensely proud of not being peasants. They looked down on the peasants as—well, as—as an elephant might look down on a chicken. The burghers were nothing much to speak of, but they *thought* they were something—so I suppose they were.

And now for the nobility. All of you know what nobility is. In some countries, one tries to exterminate the noblemen as one exterminates cockroaches; but that is a strange idea; for the cockroaches eat all they see, from the uppers of shoes to breadcrumbs; but noblemen eat rather less than ordinary people. For it is a well-known fact that it is not refined to have a good appetite. Of course, noblemen nowadays are

not as they used to be; still, noblemen are noblemen, say what you like. There were not many of them, but each one was of great importance, as, for instance, the queen bee in a beehive, or a big millionaire in a small country—even more so; for though a millionaire is rich to-day, he may very well lose his money to-morrow, if he is lucky, or unlucky, whatever you may call it. But the noblemen of olden times could not become poor. They had quietly divided the country between them, as you cut up a birthday cake. "I take mine, thou tak'st thine, nothing is left over!" Those are the words of an old game. "I take mine," said the noblemen and took the lion's share. "Thou tak'st thine," they said to the clergy, who took the rest—let the burghers and the peasants see where there was anything left for them to take.

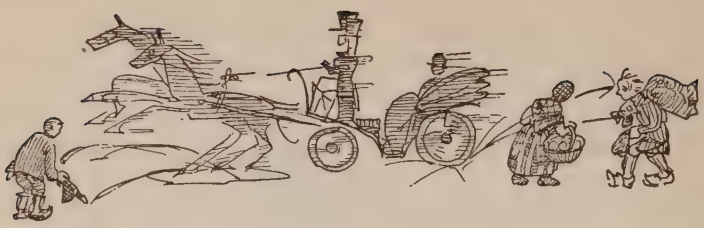
Most of you probably know that nobility is something one is born with; but it was not always so. Our Lord did not create different grades of people, and most likely no noblemen at all. They came later, after the kings had come. If a man had been immensely useful, lending the king money or soldiers for his wars, the king made him a nobleman. It was easy enough for a wealthy man to provide soldiers. He sim-

ply took the peasants by the neck, swung his whip over them, and said, "You get a hustle on and learn to handle a sword or a gun properly, or I will show you a thing or two!" That taught them in no time to go to war and kill people.

When a man was made noble, the first thing he did generally was to get a new name—the old one did not seem quite elegant enough—and then a new *coat of arms*. The coat of arms was meant to decorate their handkerchiefs—no, that is not so, for at that time they used their fingers; handkerchiefs had not then been invented—but, anyway, to put on their saddles and on their houses. The coat of arms was

not put on the forks either, for there were not any; even the King and his men ate with the five-pronged fork with which we are fitted from birth.

Besides the coat of arms and a fine name, the nobleman was given an estate. An estate is a stretch of land, sometimes so big that it takes one man one day to ride round it, without galloping; but it may also be so big that it takes two men two days to ride round it, even when galloping. Once such a stretch of land



had become noble, it could never become anything else, any more than a horse can become a colt, or a hen a chicken.

It was the grandest thing in the world to be a nobleman—next to being a king or an emperor. The noblemen were well aware of that, and kept far away from the burghers, whose smell they did not like. The peasants are not worth while mentioning; they did not count at all, not any more than the mud splashing the wheels of the noblemen's fine coaches. All looked up to the noblemen with awe, as you bend your head far back when you want to look at the spire of a church tower reaching to the clouds. It was as inconceivable for a lady of the nobility to marry a burgher as it is nowadays for a princess to marry a street-car conductor.

Such were the conditions in Denmark a few hun-

dred years ago. Since then, much has been changed. The Danish peasants are now almost the richest people in the country, having fine large farms with threshing machines and sewing machines, milking machines and incubators, pianos, silk dresses, and automobiles. Burghers go to court nowadays—not all the time, of course—no, indeed! but when they are invited. The ministers receive fixed salaries, and never risk eating and drinking enough to burst, on the contrary, poor fellows! Only the noblemen are almost as well off as in former days. They have kept their big estates. That is, they were still keeping them when Bibi was a little girl, some years ago; just now the people have begun to cut the estates to pieces, as the noblemen formerly cut Denmark to pieces. But in Bibi's childhood that was unheard of; people were still bending their heads 'way back to look up to the noblemen.

It must be admitted, however, that the noblemen —especially those in Denmark—are extremely refined people. They neither smack their lips nor put their knives in their mouths nor eat with open mouths. Neither do they help themselves to more than they intend to eat (a very bad habit which

people have in the big country called America, where there is so much money that it is considered refined to waste the food). The Danish noblemen have good manners; and good manners are as important for people as a pedigree is for animals. The Danish noblemen always have clean white hands and nice clothes, huge parks, and hothouses where they grow strawberries in winter and grapes in summer. They keep a gardener on the estate, who is so exalted that he always ends by resembling his master a little in his walk and gestures, as well as in his language. His master has, of course, one or two footmen, or many footmen; and his master's wife has a maid who combs her mistress's hair and picks up her handkerchief if she drops it, and presses her gowns. A real noble lady does not know what a kitchen looks like, for she has never been in one, and a real nobleman does not know how to pack a trunk, for his valet does that.

This may give you an idea of the rank and splendor of Bibi's grandparents. Moreover, their estate, Klinteborg, was one of the very biggest estates in Denmark; it was almost like a small kingdom by itself. If Bibi's grandfather had got the idea of buying a

gold crown and a red velvet cloak trimmed with ermine, and had worn both at dinner, I do not think he could have been put in prison for that. Maybe he even could have called himself king without being fined; but not King of Denmark, for only one man is entitled to that name.

CHAPTER XVI

IN DANGER OF LIFE

BIBI had never been on a ferry. When her daddy point-blank forbade her something, she would not think of doing it, no matter what foolish things she did. And Daddy had often said, "Bibi, wherever you go, I want you to stay in Jutland; do not take the ferry to Funen, for your grandparents live there."

That was as effective as if he had said, "Do not go to Funen, for it is full of snakes and crocodiles." Bibi was more than willing to keep away from "that high-born crowd," as she insisted on calling her grandparents, although she had never seen them and knew nothing about them except that they had "cut her mamma's hand off." But now she was going on the ferry with her father's full permission. She certainly felt no longing to see the high-born crowd; but the castle would be worth while seeing!

If only they didn't have that old gate in Switzerland—think of a country packed so full of mountains that it would take you hundreds of years to learn

them by heart; and the mountains so high that they would take you almost up to heaven! And on the top of the mountains, in the perpetual snow, you were likely to catch golden eagles and falcons with your bare hands! And if you lost your way in a snowstorm, or fell down into an abyss—perhaps a bottomless one —one of the real St. Bernard dogs would come with a bottle of warm tea round its neck, drag you to the convent, and thus save you. That would give you

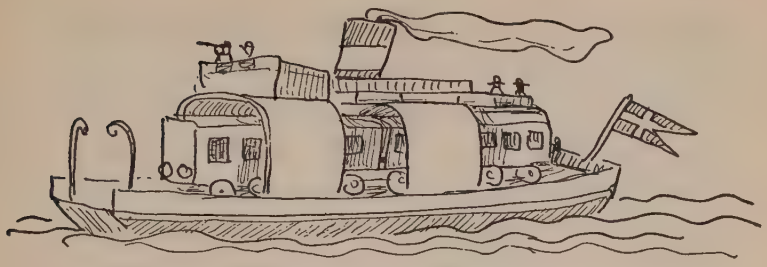
the chance to see a real convent with monks—think of the pictures she would draw!—But that gate—that gate. . . .

Nevertheless, a ferry is nice and interesting, also. Bibi had often stood in Frederits, looking at the flat ferry which rather resembled a piece of a street pushed into the water. It looked so strange, sliding from the Belt into the port. It would be packed full of passengers, and have a whole train in the middle of the "street," below two upper stories, also full of passengers, on either side; and there would be sort of small shining brown houses with windows all the way.

Now she was going herself. . . .

She paid for the stacks of sandwiches devoured by the black children; and then the children went away hand in hand, without even smiling good-bye; of course, they could not say anything, not knowing Danish. It costs a lot of money to fill two children up.

Bibi left the station and went down the street to the port, following the crowd. There was the ferry. It was as brightly illuminated as the stores before Christmas, and was so huge that one felt just a tiny bit awed looking at it. When everybody was on board, some sailors with funny fat stomachs came running,



stretching two thick, heavy iron chains in front of the people; and Boom! Boom! Boom! Here came the whole train roaring, making a noise like cannon. Bibi panted as if she herself were dragging the train along. If only it would stop in time; otherwise, it would go straight into the water. But it stopped. Bibi had to go and peek into the cars. There were baggage vans and cattle vans. She sneaked into a cattle car. Why, yes, those cows were treated all right. But here was a car full of pigs.

The blood rushed to Bibi's face as if she were going to burst with anger. But it was more than anger—it was fury. Those mean toughs! Such cruelty! Where was that captain? She found out that he was on the upper bridge where no trespassers were allowed. But Bibi was no trespasser! You may be sure she hurried to tell the whole story, before giving the captain a

chance to tell her to mind her own business. But it *was* her business! She ran from one person to another until, by good fortune, she found one who happened to be a veterinary; and now things took a turn for the better. Bibi dragged him across the deck, where people stood packed like sardines; for everyone in Denmark travels in summer to see how everyone else lives, and who has the nicest house. The veterinary went to the captain and arranged the whole thing, much to Bibi's relief; and he promised Bibi to take the matter up and see that the poor pigs were transported in a better way after this. He had the wagon aired, and the pigs were given some water; but two of them—two of them had already died! But the veterinary said maybe it was their own fault, for it isn't easy for pigs to travel a long way in hot weather. Bibi and he became fast friends. He lived in a house near a lake and a forest, and invited Bibi to come and visit him and see his dogs; he had five of them. He had started being a real man-doctor; but afterward he studied animals; for, like Bibi, he liked animals much better than persons. Bibi did not let go of his hand. What a nice uncle he would make! She was on the point of telling him where she was going

when the ferry stopped. That was too bad! There was quite a lot that she hadn't yet seen. She hadn't even tried to sit in the train while they were on the water.

Arrived at Funen, the passengers hurried into the train which was waiting for them. For only first- and second-class compartments cross on the ferry. Third-class travelers are considered a little like the peasants of old; they have to stand on the deck, or go around in the little houses, until the ferry has crossed and they can get into their plain third-class compartments again.

Bibi found it hard to tear herself away from the ferry. She looked at the cars coming thundering out, and the gangplanks being crowded by people loaded down with suitcases, traveling rugs, umbrellas, and cardboard boxes—like the time of the flood when they had to enter the Ark, and bring all their possessions, besides two of each kind of animals. Mercy, how big that Ark must have been!

Looking at the ferry, and down the ferry, the way you look down a street when all the lanterns are lighted, she saw another ferry, just ready to start out. So that was the way they did? One came in and the other went out, all day and all night.

Bibi looked at the other ferry sliding into the water; a ship or a boat will rock the tiniest bit, even in perfectly quiet weather; but a ferry *slides*, as when you shove a footstool over a smooth floor. The water sparkled red and green. And tiny bells were heard from the water. Did those bells come from the bottom, she wondered? And who rang them? Nobody could be sitting under the water, pulling the rope! Ding-dong, ding-dong! The ferry was getting smaller and smaller.

Bibi heard a train whistle a couple of times. That was a familiar sound—there were always trains whistling and puffing at home, at her own station. She turned round—there went the train that was to have taken her along to Odense!

Well, Bibi didn't care much. To speak quite frankly, she was really rather glad of this accident, especially because it was something which she couldn't help at all. But now what should she do? The train had gone. She was on Funen. And it was night.

She knew all about Funen. The water that separates it from Jutland was called Little Belt, and it took fifteen minutes to cross on the ferry. The water between Funen and Zealand was Big Belt, and it took

an hour to cross that. On the map Funen looks like a rather big inkspot. Still, it is not called Denmark's Inkspot, but—guess what!—*Denmark's Butter Hole!* Shall I tell you why? Well, in former days, all Danes ate porridge. (In very olden days you know they ate only oysters, but that is so long ago that it doesn't count.) They ate porridge every day; often three times a day. The whole family, with the maids and the hired men, would sit round a huge wooden bowl full of *sweet porridge* or *sour porridge*, and they would eat right out of the bowl, each with his wooden spoon. You dipped your spoon first into the porridge, then into a pan with milk that stood on the table, and then into the butter hole in the middle of the porridge. Many people ate the porridge only for the sake of the butter, which, of course, was the best part of the dish. I think I had better tell you how the two kinds of porridge are made, so that you can try them. Sour porridge is made of sour milk with grits, and sweet porridge of sweet milk with grits; that is all the difference. After the meal, you licked your spoon long and thoroughly on both sides, wiped it in the hollow of your arm (where we all are so ticklish), and hung it on a strap under the ceiling. That was, as I said, in

former days. In our days, the peasants eat with silver spoons, and wash their dishes with a scrubbing brush and soap and water. But as the butter was the most luscious part of the porridge, and Funen the most luscious part of Denmark, Funen was called Denmark's Butter Hole, and will probably be called that for many hundred years.

The biggest town on Funen is called Odense. The name is derived from Odin, in whom the Danes believed before our Lord and Christianity were introduced. At that time, Odin was Lord of Denmark. He lived in Odense. Later on, the Danish kings lived there. That is more than a hundred years ago, but everybody has a grandfather or a great-granduncle who remembers it. People in Odense are very proud because the kings lived there. They are immensely refined, and walk with tiny bits of steps, for that is most genteel. They do not call each other just Mr. and Mrs.; no, they use the longest titles they can think of. Meeting each other in the street one will say, "Good-morning, Mr. State's Councilor, I am so glad to see the Mr. State's Councilor, how is the dear Mrs. State's Counciloress?" And the state's councilor will answer, "Thank you, Mr. Secret-

Conference-Councilor, I am very well, and how is the Mrs. Secret-Conference-Counciloress?" It certainly takes time to converse in Odense, if one wants to be polite and well-mannered.

Odense is the birthplace of the writer of the finest fairy tales in the world. I do not have to tell you his name. For—isn't it lovely?—if you ask a little Japanese girl, or a little boy from Siberia, or a little cowboy in the Far West of America, or the daughter of an Australian farmer, "What is the name of the man who wrote the very best fairy tales and stories in all the world?" they will all answer the same name, even though it might sound a little different; for, of course, the Turks have a different pronunciation from that of the Chinese or the Indians or the Russians.

He was born in such a wee bit of a house that it might almost be taken up and dusted and sent as a Christmas present to a boy or a girl. Think of having a tiny house that one could fold together and take along, and put up any place in the fields or the woods, knowing that it was the one in which Hans Christian Andersen was born—the one in which he lived as a small boy, going barefoot on weekdays and wearing wooden shoes on Sundays! Of course, he did not asso-

ciate with the refined people in Odense who were invited to see the King—mercy, no! His father was only a poor cobbler; and even if you become rather famous all over the world (and perhaps in other worlds which we do not know), in Denmark it always remains a little humiliating to be the son of a mere cobbler.

So much about Odense. But outside of the town, all over Funen, are the estates. And what estates! Not even in France do you find finer ones. They have towers which can be seen far, far away. Around the buildings are high ramparts, and inside the ramparts there are deep moats filled with water on which there are swans floating, for that looks so picturesque in

paintings; and there are bridges across the moats. In former days the bridges could be drawn up, and the enemies or whoever it was you didn't want inside simply had to stay on the other side of the moat. And if they tried to enter anyway, you told your hirelings (they were some kind of ogres, kept for that purpose) to mount the tower and shoot the enemies down. The whole ridge of the castle was full of small slits into which they stuck their guns when aiming at the enemy. Meanwhile, the women—the fine, noble women—put kettles with pitch—or was it tar?—on

the fire, and when it boiled, they poured it over the heads of the enemies. It was well that Bibi didn't live at that time, for she would certainly have called it "abominable cruelty to animals," even if it were done to mere human beings.

On the estates the furniture is many hundred years old, and the lawns have not been dug over for centuries; that makes them as soft as velvet, and the lawn mower makes them as even as clipped hair.

After getting her bearings a little, Bibi wondered what was the best way to spend the time until morning, when she could take another train to Odense, and from there to Klinteborg. Perhaps she could wait for the next ferry, and keep on going back and forth between Funen and Jutland all night. But something caught her eye—a little white boat that made her think of her own, at home. Sometimes, when she came down to the shore, she would find her boat not pulled up quite right, or the oars wet, which showed that somebody had been borrowing it. Bibi would never get angry, she was always very generous with her possessions. Therefore, she saw no harm in borrowing this boat either, for a tiny little row in Little

Belt. She never had been out in a rowboat alone at night. Wouldn't that be thrilling!

If you are very anxious to do something, you sometimes start doing it unintentionally, before having quite made up your mind about it. The boat happened to slide down into the water. Bibi happened to jump in, and to row out—and there she was.

She was rocking so nicely in the beautiful little boat. It was red inside and white outside, colored like Dannebrog (you remember the flag that fell down

from heaven?); the moon was moving across the sky, and at a little distance from it was the evening star —just as the mayor's wife, going marketing, was followed at a little distance by her cook with the basket. Bibi was sure the evening star would like nothing better than to take the moon's arm and pretend to be of as high rank as the moon; but it didn't dare!

Bibi rowed with long, sure strokes. If you live near a fiord and a creek, you learn to row as early as you learn to walk. She did not need any compass. She knew the Polar Star, the Big Dipper, Cassiopeia. You cannot lose your way when you know the stars. The sky is a map that is easy to decipher.

The night was soft and calm; the water was full of phosphorescence. Do you know what phosphorescence is? It is said to be millions of tiny little infusoria (just forget that word, it is too hard to remember) with phosphorus in their bodies. So each of these small infusoria is like a small electric bulb. Bibi had heard about phosphorescence but had never seen it. She had silver oars, dripping with liquid silver. She stuck her hand into the water—at once it became like silver. She laid the oars down and clapped her

hands—this was like a fairy tale come true! She would just love to take a swim in that phosphorescent water, so as to write Daddy about it, or brag of it where she was going. When a king died in India and a new one was crowned, the elephants were gilded or silvered for the coronation. But if the gold or silver were not washed off within six hours, the elephants would die, so great is the danger in being gilded or silvered. But the silvery water was not dangerous—surely not. Bibi took off her dress slowly, pulling it above her shoulders. Then came the nice white embroidered slip, made from Mamma's wedding petticoat. She folded her things neatly, putting her little red cap on top; inside her new kid shoes, smelling like bitter almonds, she stuck her stockings. But she had no bathing suit. Shucks, the moon wouldn't hurt her—but, no, she had never in her life gone swimming without a bathing suit; you did not do that in her town, not even if there wasn't so much as a cat within a hundred miles of you. She took off her waist, then her little panties, and now there was only her little shirt left. She could easily dry that on a branch, or in the train to-morrow! She jumped out into the silvery water, dressed only in her little

stumpy shirt. A silvery little girl swimming after a silver boat in a silver sea.

She turned on her back. The sky up there, the moon, the stars, and the thin, dainty clouds—all was silvery. Far, far away the eel-fishers were sliding past. She was well acquainted with them. They would sit in the boat as still as mice, with the big lantern hanging above the water. When the eel would be dazzled by the light the eel-fisher, as quick as lightning, would spear it on the ugly fork. Bibi hated the eel-fishers—but they did look nice with their torches or lanterns! And she was simply wildly fond of smoked eel.

It seemed to her as if she were floating around among the stars. She hardly knew what was up and what was down. The water was lukewarm, the air soft. Now somebody ought to play the accordion!

When she turned round again, the boat had gotten ahead of her; the current was driving it away, and a little wind had sprung up. Bibi's heart began to thump. In the boat were not only her clothes, but also her money in the little pocket with the mother-of-pearl button, and—her pass to all the Danish railroads! Her pride and glory! The proof that her daddy was almost the mightiest man in Denmark!

Bibi began to swim at full speed; she shot through the water like an arrow. Wasn't she always taking all kinds of first prizes for swimming? But the boat was teasing her, the waves were teasing her and chuckling around her. She clenched her teeth, trying to keep back some of the ugly words which the ox drivers taught her. The harder she worked, the farther away the boat seemed. And it was not her boat! It belonged to somebody else! And if she did not catch it, maybe it would float up through Kattegat and Skagerak, out into the North Sea and way over to America! And people would think she had *stolen* it! Her teeth began to chatter so strangely, it sounded like a stork. Her back felt as if something hairy were beginning to grow on it. If she had only chosen Switzerland—she would have been sure to find a key that would fit that gate. No joke swimming around here, trying to catch a boat that teased you, and perhaps getting pneumonia, and dying.

Bibi would not think of crying for help—she was no baby, I should hope! She could swim ashore when she wanted to, couldn't she? Although, when you came to think of it, even old, grown-up, awfully courageous people cried for help when in danger of

their lives. They did. And wasn't she in danger of her life? Or was it not considered dangerous until you had begun to drown and had gone down the second time? If you went down the third time you would not come up until you were dead. Sure, she was in danger of her life!

As soon as Bibi realized the danger, she gave her famous Indian hoot, known by the whole town and audible over half the town. When once she had begun, she kept on. She gave yell after yell, now floating, now swimming. But no one heard her, No one came.

Only once before in her life had she been in such a bad fix; that was the year before, at the school picnic, when she raced down the Sugar Loaf (which is one of the rather low mountains in Denmark), and was buried under the gravel in the gravel pit. It felt as if she had a whole city on top of her, and she was sure she was going to die. But she was dug out and was not the least bit dead.

She cried. She yelled. She heard, herself, how miserably faint it sounded. Like a bird chased by the cat, before she could get down into the garden and rescue it. There was no strength left in her yells. She was so tired. So tired. She would like to close her eyes and

stop calling; she would like to go to sleep—just go to sleep—it was so soft and cozy in the water—only cold.

Far away was the eel-fisher in his boat. He was sliding forward soundlessly, so as not to frighten the eels away. His wife was holding the lantern over the water; he was spearing the eels. Suddenly his wife whispered, "What is that?"

Her husband had heard nothing. "Sit still and don't talk! Women can never be quiet."

But his wife lifted the lantern, saying, "Somebody is calling for help! I think it is a child!"

The man listened—why, yes, now he heard it, too. This time he did not tell his wife to be quiet. She took one oar, he the other, and off they went, slashing the water with their oars, and dashing through foam and spray. Who cared now whether or not the eels were frightened? Let them run away as much as they wanted to. A child was crying for help! At night, too!

They shot through the water, in the direction of the calls, which were getting fainter and fainter. Now nothing was heard, not a sound. But over there in front, something white was sinking—something white and thin. . . .

The Lord help us, it is a child! Where did it go

down? The man and his wife pound the oars through the water, the boat takes big jumps over the quiet sea. There! There it is again! Two more strokes, and the man has hold of one of Bibi's yellow braids. Another minute, and she is on board, wrapped in the wife's shawl and woolen skirt, and being rubbed and scrubbed as if she were a dirty shoe and had to be cleaned for a Sunday walk.

At last, Bibi gave a snort like a whale, and the sea water squirted out of her mouth, as if she had been trying to swallow all Little Belt. The man held a bottle to her mouth and made her drink, but she spat and sputtered. Whew, how it burned! For it was *brandy*, and she had to drink it, so as not to get pneumonia. Now she became wide awake and was overjoyed. Fancy, she had been in danger of her life, *real* danger!

But where was her boat? And her clothes, and her pass? She had to tell the whole story, and was scolded by the eel-fisher and his wife for having been so silly. But they did not scold very much. Now they put up their sails. How the waves rippled, and how the boat cut through the water! In a twinkling, the little white boat was overtaken, and in another twinkling Bibi

had put her clothes on—except the shirt, which was being dried, hanging in the mast.

The eel-fisher and his wife sailed all the way to the bulwark with Bibi, towing the borrowed boat. Bibi thanked them very much for fishing her up and bringing her ashore. Now she had been in danger of her life twice. She made up her mind to collect dangers; that would be much more fun than collecting stamps or shooting-stars.

She looked around, to get her bearings. Then she went into the waiting room at the station, spread her little wet shirt on a table, sat down in a chair, and slept soundly until the cleaning woman came in the morning and turned her out, just before the morning train started for Odense.

CHAPTER XVII

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

DEAR DADDY:

I came within a hair's breadth of drowning in Little Belt and now I am in a garden you can't imagine. It is like the cakehouse in the woods, only there is no witch and no cake, but only *apples* and *pears* and *plums* and all over the garden the grass is covered with apples as big as—well I can only have one in each pocket. There are so many you can't count them. The branches bend way down to the ground, not naturally but because they are so full of apples

and pears. If you touch a branch with plums ever so softly it pours down plums until you are nearly squashed. There are red plums and yellow plums and blue plums and green plums spattered with red and a whole alley bordered with hazelnut trees brimfull of nuts and a walnut tree growing way up to heaven but they are not ripe, sad to say, but the mulberries are ripe and do you know what a mulberry tree is? For I never saw one before. The garden belongs to an inn and I have ordered two sandwiches with Holstein cheese for I think that is the cheapest and I have spent all my money. The mulberry tree is so big that I think if it goes on growing it will fill up the whole garden and push all the other trees out except the walnut tree for that is also immense. And when they pick the mulberries what do you think? They put sheets under it and shake it and six hundred pounds of mulberries fall down and the woman sells them to people who live many miles away and they are a little sour and a little sweet and are black but some are only red yet and look like blackberries but a little longer. And the woman said eat all you want to and fill your pockets there is enough and to spare. And do you know what she does? for she sat down on the

bench and we became friends. She said she gives the *Polish girls* (you know they come from Poland every year to pull turnips and they live on potatoes and skimmed milk) she gives them all the fallen apples and they make apple sauce every day and are very happy, but I said she might send one or two bags full to the penitentiary for they never get apple sauce there. At least I dont think they do what do you think? But she didnt seem to take to that idea. And I have been up in the tower of St. Canute's Church in Odense. And I could see the highways there is one to the north and one to the south and one to the east and one to the west as straight as if they were drawn with a ruler. In the crypt they keep St. Canute's bones. For he was a saint, but the bones were not laid out so I didn't see them. I asked my way to where Hans Christian Andersen was born. Such a tiny bit of a house like those in Narrowstreet and Back Alley, where you can reach up to the eaves trough. But I didnt think there was much to that house. He had slippers with cross-stitch embroidery like those porter Sennels wears when his bunions hurt him. But I dont understand what all those ladies with, what do you call it, lornyet I guess were nosing around for.

And the man who took care of the house and took in the money he said they came from way over in America and Japan. I know there was a lady from Japan for that was easy to see and she came just to see the house where he was born. How can people be so curious for it is really none of their business where he was born, is it? But I wish they had given him the yellow palace for it lies in such a nice garden.

I ate two ice-cream cones and a banana in Odense. Then I took the train for a little while but soon I had to get out and walk. Everyone I asked said for me to go straight ahead past the mill and through a grove and to the left of the red farm and this side of the church and past the small lake and so forth but I could not remember all that and at last I got tired. But then I met a scissors grinder with a dog that limped, and I looked at the wound and it was nothing but a big thorn which I pulled out, but the scissors grinder was so fond of the dog he wouldn't part with it for a thousand kroner for it was just as smart as a human being, but I gave him my other tenkrone bill for bones for the poodle and then I helped him pull the cart a little to give the dog a little rest, but my how that rope hurt my shoulder. I am quite

swollen from it, but he gave me his big word of honor never to touch the dog with so much as his little finger. He was going another way and I was so tired and hungry and then I saw this inn and the garden.

Goodbye Daddy I have to go now for the woman here knows where Klinteborg is, but I am just telling her I know somebody there. Your own Bibi.

The landlady called Bibi into the kitchen, offering her a bowl of thick milk and a fried sole. After eating heartily of cheese sandwiches, apples, pears, mulberries, plums, thick milk, fried sole, and finally red porridge,[1] Bibi felt ready to burst. Just then the most

[1]Cold fruit pudding, national dessert of Denmark.

splendid carriage came drving up to the inn. It was a real glass coach, lacquered like the lacquered Chinese trays in Bibi's father's dining room and the little red table in her mamma's room. On the high box, towering over the coach in order to be as conspicuous as possible, were two imposing brown men with high hats; they had silver buttons in their coats, and each coat had one flap turned a little back, as if blown by the wind; but that was only to show the coat of arms which was embroidered there in silver! Also the brown cloths with which the horses were covered had the coat of arms in silver embroidery in one corner. The men wore brown gloves. The landlady asked them to take Bibi along for a short way. They were very willing, and lifted her up between them. They came from one of the big estates, but not from Klinteborg, and after a while she had to leave them and continue her way on foot. But arriving at a crossroad she took the wrong direction; one always does. She walked and walked; once in a while she climbed a tree and tore her clothes a little; she watched the woodpeckers run up and down, and found a squirrel, and under an old oak she saw a badger playing with its young ones. It did not see

her, or it certainly would have run away; but she was sitting in a tree, as quiet as a mouse.

Toward evening, she stood outside of the huge park of Klinteborg.

She tiptoed stealthily along the high hedge. She certainly would not use the real entrance and risk being seen by "that crowd." At last she found a place where she could squeeze through. Now she was walking between tall green hedges trimmed as smooth as the wall of a room. The walks bent and curved, but seemingly never came to an end. There were round holes in the hedges here and there, like the portholes of a ship. Through one of these holes Bibi caught sight of the castle, in the middle of a lake, lighted with golden flames by the evening sun.

Bibi walked and walked, getting quite mixed up by all the smooth green hedges—they could not have been smoother if they had been trimmed with embroidery scissors. She did not seem to make any progress. And suddenly it dawned on her that she was in a labyrinth! And she had no red thread, like what-was-his-name, the boy who found his way out of the labyrinth, or the monster would have eaten him. You can walk around in a labyrinth for a hun-

BIBI CAUGHT SIGHT OF THE CASTLE

dred years without finding your way out, if you have no thread to tie to a corner to show that you have been there before.

Bibi took to her heels, running as fast as she knew how—as if that would help. At last she squatted down in one of the walks, quite disheartened. Should she call to the gentleman she saw over there among the trees? I should say *not*. Rather starve and be found as a skeleton, many years hence. At this thought she sat up and gasped: Why, this was another danger of life! Number three! A labyrinth! Hurrah!

She was kicking her feet so that one shoe came off. Of course, there was a hole in her stocking; there always was. That was because the nail on her big toe grew with such terrific speed. It was like a little knife, cutting holes in all her stockings.

A story loomed up in her thoughts—how was it, now? There was a mason on the top of a high chimney, and his wife saved him by raveling her stocking —no, *he* raveled *his*, and tied a bit of a brick to the thread and let it fall, and his wife tied a string to it, and when he had hoisted the string up, she tied a thick rope to it, and the man hoisted that up and

let himself down! Bibi began to ravel her stocking, making a big ball of the yarn. It did not seem the right thing to wear half a socking, so she left the remaining part right there. She tied one end of the yarn to a corner of the hedge and set out hopefully. And would you believe it—it sounds like a miracle—before the ball of yarn was used up she had found the way out?

All this was hers! *All, all this!* She put her hands on her back, and stuck out her stomach, as the rich farmers used to do; that makes you feel much more important. Only she ought to have had a long pipe in her mouth, to go with it. *What a castle!!!!* But she had no time to stand still and look at the castle, she had to look at everything else at the same time. On one side there were trees as thick as those in America, in the trunks of which there were said to be openings big enough to let a big full hay wagon through. There were no holes in these trees, but she might see to that, of course. On the other side there were hothouses. Tall, tall houses all made of glass, like those in the Botanical Gardens in Copenhagen. The middle one was as tall as a church. She must get in there. She opened the door just a little—mm! it

A GLASS HOUSE FULL OF GRAPES

smelled of warmth and mould and—and of something like goldfish, or some kind of water with fertilizer in it. What palm trees! Think of climbing them, sitting in their tops, rocking back and forth under leaves as big as the umbrellas over the park tables at home! And up there—why—there were *bananas!* Big clusters of ripe bananas, which ordinarily grow in Florida, or some such place. And dainty, dainty little ferns, as flimsy as the thinnest Tönder lace!

Bibi ventured farther, through a glass door, another glass house, and another glass door. From glass house to glass house. Now she stood in one full of *grapes!* They were hanging in thick blue clusters as big as her own head, bunches upon bunches. Standing on tiptoe, she could just reach them. She found a box, climbed on it, and felt them with her hand. Such a cluster would be likely to weigh more than two pounds, perhaps ten pounds! She sawed one off with her nails. It gave quite a bump in falling, and some of the grapes were crushed. Bibi was full of food up to her ears; but she always had room for a blue grape. She held her dress up like an apron, for no pocket in this world was big enough to hold such a cluster of grapes.

The next house was chock full of huge ripe *apricots* and *peaches*, growing up the walls, and ready to burst with juice. Bibi simply had to pick one or two, just to take home as a souvenir and show to Daddy. But it is fun to pick fruit—when once you have begun it is hard to stop—and soon her dress had room for no more. When she came home, she was going to draw a big picture of the fruit and color it; she could almost feel in her fingers how it ought to be done.

Finally, she came to the very last glass house—but she had never in her life imagined anything like it! The walls were covered with some kind of stone with holes like those in a sponge; and in between there grew the most delicate grass and the most feathery ferns. From the ceiling hung cage after cage, big and splendid, and in the cages were all possible kinds of yellow and green and red and blue and purple birds. Some of them had long thin tails, shining like gold and silver, and sticking out between the bars; and some were so small that they might be humming birds. But those over there with the big beaks were not strange to her; the druggist at home had some. And under the cages—like a big billiard table from

the Club, only bigger—was a green pond with water lilies, red and white, and goldfish. Many many goldfish, and the so-called veil-backs with long veils of gold and silver! Bibi took a long and deep breath—that also was hers!!!! *All of it. . . .*

But she would have to go—for, of course, she did not want to stay here. Not under any circumstances —no, no!

But it was very hard to go back through all the beautiful glass houses and say good-bye to them. When she entered the last—and even then there were just as many on the other side which she had not seen —she ran right into a man. Heavens! He had a cane in his hand. Now he lifted it. "You thief, you!" But Bibi had already slipped by him before he struck out to catch her. Looking back, she saw that he was limping—it would be easy enough to run away from him! She rushed out, calling him a bad name from a distance. She was sure it was the gardener; he looked very important, as if all this belonged to him.

Arrived at the cliff near the lake, she stopped and looked toward the castle. Merely by looking at it, she felt so strange and quiet, as if in a church. Sometimes

you dream that the stars are great big flowers, and you fly from star to star to pick them. That is about the same feeling. When you awaken it is all over—but her castle was *not* over.

There was a bridge leading across the lake; it was probably of iron, but it looked like a piece of black lace. And the whole bridge was full of golden flowers, called *nasturtiums*, the seeds of which can be eaten in salads. How she would love to walk on that bridge just once! And stand in the middle of it gazing at the water, the swans, the trees that bent 'way over the water. How beautifully the castle was reflected in the lake! Now there were two castles, one above, gilded by the sun, and one below, flickering in fiery red flames from the depths of the water. She almost liked the one in the water the best. The elves might live in that one—but there were no elves, they existed only in fairy tales; still, the castle above was real.

She looked down the cliff—how lovely! Outside of heaps of little dolls' houses there were ducks and ducklings, and other birds which she did not know. She clasped her hands with delight, thereby causing the costly fruits to fall down and roll into the lake.

Well, what about it? She wasn't hungry. And the fruits looked nice, too, bobbing up and down on the water.

There were probably more than a hundred rooms in that castle. She made up her mind to count the windows. But first she wanted to take a look at the strange birds. When she approached them, they naturally became frightened, and started shrieking and quacking and flapping their wings; but Bibi knew how to handle all kinds of animals and birds. She

quacked and peeped with them, piped and whistled for them—and soon the whole flock surrendered to her. She lay down at full length in the grass and the birds came close up to her; the little ducklings even waddled over her, pecking at her head with their funny little broad beaks.

Over there was the castle, with a mighty tower at each end. Around its roof were jags, battlements, embrasures, from the time when a castle was like a country, and had to be defended against the enemy. But then the lake here was the moat, and the cliff on which she was lying was the rampart; and the bridge was not a lace bridge, but a drawbridge.

What was that? Something warm, smooth, round,

rolled right down into her hand. An egg, as true as you live and breathe! And one of the strange birds stood looking at her with its round eyes, as if saying, "Did *I* lose something, or was it one of the others?" She was not at all hungry—far from it; but who wouldn't do away with an egg coming like that from some kind of outlandish duck? She cracked the shell against the sole of her shoe, and began to suck the contents, when the egg suddenly slipped away from her, and white and yolk spread over her dress, which had been none too clean, even before this.

"Hi, there, you girl! Get a hustle on and come up here, or I'll come and help you!"

The gardener!

Be taken alive—never! With one jump, Bibi was up, ready to dash away as quickly as Sliepner with his eight legs—when she stumbled over a duckling, fell, rolled over, and nearly ended in the lake.

If that had not happened, that idiot of a gardener never would have caught her. His hand felt like an iron vise on her arm. "I got you, you little thief! Who told you to go and steal in our hothouses?" He shook Bibi vigorously. She sprawled and stamped her feet, hissing, "Thief your own self! Can't I eat some of my

own grapes if I want to? Let me go, and get out, you old fogy!"

If the man hadn't been angry before, he became so now. "That's enough! Now I'll take you to the Count, and we'll see some fun!"

Bibi is seething. She cannot voice all the coarse words which seem to be sticking in her throat. The man drags her along. And now she hears a voice from the other side of the lake: "What is the matter, gardener? You seem angry!" The gardener pulls her to the lace bridge and toward the castle. Bibi tries desperately to tear herself loose—better jump over the railing and drown than arrive at Klinteborg in this manner!

"A thousand pardons, sir, but this here little thief . . ."

Bibi looks up, ready to send out a flow of words. She sees—she cannot believe her own eyes—the gray gentleman! And behind him—the gray lady! She must have gone to the wrong place, after all. But that it should just be *their* place—the—the gray people . . .

She begins to stutter: "I thought—I thought—that this was—that this was Klinteborg."

"Why, it certainly *is* Klinteborg!" says the gray gentleman, laughing. "But how did you happen to get here in this strange way, Bibi?"

But, before Bibi can collect her wits enough to answer, she is in the arms of the gray lady, who whispers to her, "Never mind how you came. You *are* here now. With us, your grandparents, who have been longing so bitterly for you."

Bibi is perfectly at sea. She has a lump in her throat as big as a potato, but, cry! I should say not!

Suddenly she remembers the gardener: "Now am I a thief, you old Methuselah! If the gray people are *my* grandparents I suppose the grapes are *my* grapes, too, hey?"

The gardener bows and scrapes, and the gray gentleman laughs and laughs. But the gray lady only cries and hugs Bibi, until Bibi says, quite frightened, "You had better let me go, for I got so dirty from that egg, for I was just sucking it when he came, that old . . ."

The gray lady strokes Bibi's hair: "Whether you are dirty or clean, I shall never let you go any more."

Here Bibi ought to have cried quickly, "Wait a minute! It takes two to decide that!" But she was

so excited and nonplussed that, for once, she lost her tongue.

Which is not to say that she did not find it again rather soon.

CHAPTER XVIII

MY CASTLE! ! ! !

DEAR SWEET DADDY:

I am living in *my own castle* and there is a footman standing behind each of our chairs. Mine is called Jan and you better believe he is elegant. He wears white silk stockings which I thought were only for ladies when they go to a dance. And white gloves when waiting on the table. And do you know what the footmen also do? They dust the rooms like real house maids, but for that they wear stumpy jackets and

knee-breeches, but no gloves. And my nails are nice and shiny for we have a ladies' maid, of course it is the gray lady's, but I borrow her and she polishes them. Daddy you would never guess it in all your life and I am so surprised I can still hardly understand it. For the gray people are—are *Mamma's Mamma and Papa!* That was why they were sitting on the bench at Mamma's grave and she was crying behind her veil. I do think they are sorry they were so mean to my own mamma for her pictures are hanging everywhere on the walls but I cant help liking them anyway. But I think you might say a word to the mayor

or somebody about giving that eel-fisher a medal. For he saved my life. Otherwise I would be dead now. And you might also send him a box of cigars. And the gray gentleman says if he can find out who he is he is going to send him an *acknowledgement*, dont you think that is going to be a hundred or perhaps a thousand kroner? An acknowledgement? He would give me anything if only I would call him *grandfather*. And I have my own buggy and the horse is called *Bella*. It is yellow with a muzzle like gray velvet. It can smell me when I am coming and neighs every time. They thought I couldn't drive. Such dumbbells! But I told them I was used to driving almost every single day, in the beer wagon and the water

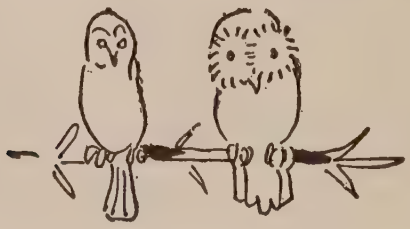
wagon and with the baker and the butcher and the grocer and all of them. And had held the reins myself, both with one and with two horses, but here we drive with—you never can guess it. Here we drive with *four* when we go to the other castles. For there are lots of them around. But we don't have two horses in front and two behind, as when you have two locomotives to a train. No, all the horses are in front of the carriage. Jan told me that, but we haven't done it yet.

The park is so beautiful that I have enough to sketch for a thousand years. Each tree is different. When I really know them I think I will give them

names. They look like people that have been turned into stone or something. With swollen veins and muscles, and writhing to get out of the ground. Some of them are ever so stuck-up, we have a long long avenue of them; but they all look alike and there is a tree like that in the club garden. Tall and pointed, with poplar leaves.

Do send porter Sennels over here with Jens stork

right away. And if he does not mind the flees—I am not sure he wont, but ask him for then he might go in the cattle car and take Mette and my turtle along, and my tame—no you may keep that or else you have nothing at all and a magpie is almost like a person isnt it? And maybe he could catch the hedgehogs without hurting them. But he must not try to catch the cat in Kortsen's yard, for cats stay with the house. But be sure not to forget liver for it. Porter Sennels may ride first class if there is a cattle car for we have money like dirt. And there is a falcon living in one of the towers, but it has no young ones and no mate for perhaps its mate has been killed. And heaps of owls. You should hear them at night, but I am not a bit afraid. I wish I could make friends with them. They are so cute and soft and maybe one of the young ones would become tame enough to sit on my shoulder! In one of the hothouses what do you



think? there are cages with fifty-seven birds like in the Zoo. But no ostriches or humming birds for they can live only in the warm countries. But we have a man who does nothing but keep a fire going under the palms and the birds summer and winter, and under the goldfishes. Now I am going to drive out in my own yellow buggy to see all the fields. After that I will write again then you will get two letters in one day. I dont have to put stamps on my letters for we have our own postman who comes for the mail and puts it into a big leather bag with our coat of arms on

it. You must not think I am going to stay very long only until I know it all by heart—see, Daddy? ? ? ? ? ?

Dear Daddy:

My what fields we have! The grain goes way over my head and you get quite hungry on the way. We have many villages but only three churches and we have four forests. I think we have wood enough to fire up under all the trains in Denmark. We do not heat our castle with peat or coal that would be much too messy for us. Our stoves are of china. One is light blue and one like primroses and kind of twisted round; that is called *Rococo*. We have a *secret staircase* in the wall! Honest to goodness secret. 143 steps. Oak, and quite worn, like a butcher's block or a chopping board. And a *white lady*. She is a ghost. She was walled in for she had done something, but she jumped out of the window and drowned. How stupid, I should think she could have swum that bit of a way. It must be she who is wearing the stairway out. Jan says so too. But I am not allowed to talk to Jan or Simson or Martin at the table. That is, I may if I want something, but not otherwise. And they stand just as straight as those old armors in the Knights'

Hall, and don't budge. One might very well think they were some of those down in Pompeii, and when you touched them they would crumble to pieces like ashes. But only at table. And Simson is from England and he has a daughter who is a real *opera singer*. I didn't know a footman could be married, did you? He is terribly grand and I have seen a picture of his

daughter. We also have a big lake with wild ducks and an island, but that is far from here. And I think we have more than a thousand trees perhaps a million that you cannot put your arms around. And we are going to have Jens stork cured, for in Copenhagen there is a speshalist for that kind of thing. And in spring we are going to build the grandest kind of a nest on the barn, and put our coat of arms on it, and do you know? Then Jens stork is going to marry! But I am sure he will come back every year, for he is my friend. In winter the deer in the forests are fed. We have so many fallow deer that I get all mixed up trying to count them. When the King comes for a visit in the fall we have hunting parties, but I am going to put a stop to that. I am not going to let them go and kill those beautiful deer. Do you know what I will do? I will put up a *target* on the barn door for

them to shoot at. Wouldnt you? One deer knows me, and we stand looking each other straight in the eyes. To-morrow I am going to the barns and the stables. I think it will take me about a hundred years to see it all. They have written to Copenhagen for an English lady for me and next year I am going to have a French one too. To-morrow I shall write more. Your own BIBI.

DEAR DADDYKINS:

Last night I dreamed that you came in the yellow buggy drawn by two fallow deer—but when I woke up you werent there. All our milkmaids wear pink dresses almost like evening dresses but of cotton. For a milkmaid must look nice too. But I have to tell you about the barns. I dont believe the King's horses live in such style as our cows. The walls are what do you think? Not painted or papered but—

altogether of *china! ! ! !* And it's all so *clean.* You cannot smell the cows at all which is too bad for that is my pet smell. I wonder what the drivers from the ox road would think if they knew that? The cows have not the least bit of dirt hanging in their tails or their hides, for they are brushed with a hair brush every single day. And they feel like silk. Their eyes are also washed but their teeth are not brushed. When

we have the foot and mouth disease, but we have only had it once. Their hoofs are rubbed with tar and polished like wooden shoes. And every morning, also when we have no foot and mouth disease, the herdsman takes a morning ride on each bull for that way they do not get so wild and do not need that horrid ring in their nose. I do like bulls, and I am going to be friends with all of them.

We have two kinds of stables for our horses, one for the riding horses and the carriage horses and another for the work horses. But in both kinds the mangers are of—guess what!—of pure *marble! ! ! !* Like the crosses in the graveyard. And did you ever see a *clean pig?* Ours are clean enough to dazzle you. The pig sty is just as shining as the cow barn and all the herdsmen wear white smocks which are never dirty. And the pigs' troughs are as clean inside and outside as the dishpan when Jensine scours it with kitchen cleanser. Do you know why? Because that makes the meat finer grained and we get more money for it from England. On another estate they milk the cows with a milking machine, but we don't I am glad to say. For how would such a machine know when the cow had a sore udder? Isnt that so? We do have an incubator for chickens, but I have to practice drawing that before I write much about it. I want one for Christmas, for when you hatch the chickens yourself you are kind of their mother and they are fond of you, arent they? The big one here hatches six hundred at a time—the gray gentleman has promised me as many crayons as there are colors in all the world. But he cannot give me that for there

are more colors in the world than there are crayons. But not everybody can see all the colors, some can only see that the sky is blue, but not that it is also red, and purple behind the red. But I dont need all those crayons at all for with my own paint box or just seven colors I can make all the colors I want to. And if I have no water I use spit. But some day I will try to paint my own Daddy, for I think I know you by heart, dont you? And you are going to hang above my bed, beside Mamma!

When the gray people take their afternoon nap I like it the best. Then I snoop around in my stocking feet (but nobody knows it). Gee the rooms and halls there are here! I get all mixed up in them, but I like to pretend I am looking for Mamma, and that she will come in a minute—only she doesnt. But anyway she lived here when she was a little girl. The floors are like the slides on the gutters when they are frozen in winter. I do so want to slide on them. Every morning Jan and Martin dust the rooms but two others that are rather lower in rank wax the floors. For that they wear such funny slippers with brushes on and then they skate over the floors and polish them that way. The floors are inlaid with squares and stars

and are called parqueted. But in the attics the floors are not parqueted nor in the Knights' Hall which I think is as big as the city hall square at home. There are only common floors there; but the boards are as wide as the dining room table! On the parqueted floors there are rugs from a place in Persia called—I have forgotten. Sometimes I lie on my stomach looking at them. I am crazy to draw them and color the pictures, they have such lovely patterns of animals and men. But we have one room, Daddy, altogether of red lacquer! Like a tea tray! With little chairs, and a tiny cupboard where there are some vases and cups you can see through. And the whole room smells of roses. But our very nicest room looks like a big forest. There are tall big trees and the knights and ladies come riding on white or brown horses followed by such funny longish dogs, and they go hunting. Farther back there is a castle, and behind that there are mountains. And they have hooded falcons on their shoulders. It is called Gobelin and it is considered very very grand. It has its own smell, to keep the moths away, for it is woven. I am going to paint that too some day, perhaps for the wall in your den ! ! !

The meals are a bore, for the gray people keep telling me they "would rather I wouldn't"—that is what they always say—run to get something I have forgotten, or speak to Jan, or lean back in my chair, and I have to wipe my mouth before I drink anything, and after. But why? My mouth is not dirty, neither is the glass, when there is only water in it. They call me Ulrikke Elisabeth, and at first I pretended not to hear them and didn't come, but then the gray lady said didn't I love my mamma, and now I come when they call me. For that is so it was also Mamma's name. Goodbye my own *beautiful* Daddy your own BIBI.

DADDY!

Do write me quick and tell me what it means to *addopt* somebody. I heard them talk about addopting me so as to make me their real daughter. But what does addopt mean? I asked Jan he says then I am going to be a *real countess.* That would be fun. But then couldnt they addopt you too? Then you would be a *real count!* I wont be addopted without you. Do look it up in the dictionary. My washbowl is of real silver but the bathtub is only of marble like the

horses' mangers. The chairs in my room are of green silk like the beech leaves in June. There are little rosebuds in the curtains which are also of green silk. You might give my clothes to the *mangle woman in Asylum Street.* She has a girl my size and many children and her husband drinks. But not my Romö

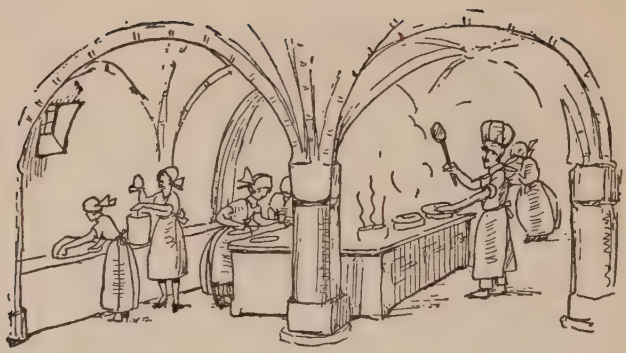
costume for Else Prest gave me that. There was a man here from Copenhagen to take my measurement for a riding habit and all the other things I think I am going to have from Paris. The coat is to be red like lacquer. I am going to have boots for riding, and real long tramping boots for tramping round in the mud with the manager. For if you are going to own such a big estate you must know everything and *perhaps I am going to be my own manager*. But then you will have to be the owner and the count. A thousand kisses BIBI.

DARLING DADDY:

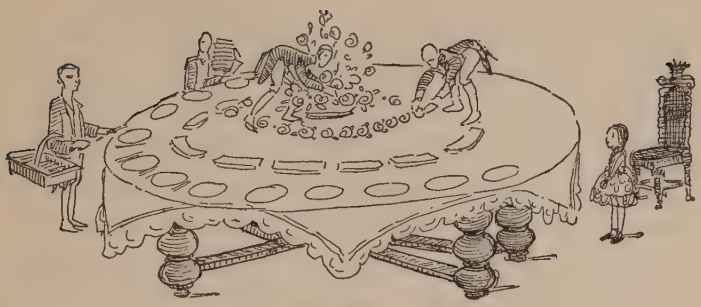
Thank you so much for Mette and Jens stork. I am sorry there were no hedgehogs. And porter Sennels wept when he saw how grand things are here. But the count—that is the gray gentleman—gave him I think a hundred kroner and shook hands with him and that made him forget to wait for a letter for you. Now do see to it that the hedgehogs have milk and brown sugar. Not too warm for then they will get scalded, and not too cold. Mette is not allowed in the rooms but sometimes she crosses the bridge anyway and goes through all the rooms and upstairs to look at herself in the big looking glass way down to the floor. And yesterday I found her sleeping in my bed. Jens stork is going to have a silver ring round his leg so that he will know where he belongs. The *Miss* is coming on Saturday, but on Friday we are going to give a dinner party and I may sit at the table! But only if I will be very quiet when I blow my nose and if I wont kick my legs when I run and next week we are going to have a harvest dance and I will be sure to tell you all about it your own Bibi who loves you.

My own Daddy!

I am sending you many pictures that is why the envelope is so big. We have two cellers one under the other there are no windows at all in the lower one but it is *pitch dark* and imagine thats where the poor prisoners were kept! And the smell of it! But that was in former days. I would rather not have seen it at all. We had to carry lanterns or we should have lost our way. I wish you could see our kitchen! It is bigger than all three waiting rooms put together and there are marble tables all the way round and in the middle there is a stove with more than twenty holes and shining like silver. The cooks wear white trousers



and long white coats and high white caps also the women cooks, but the housekeeper who runs the kitchen is quite full of wrinkles for sometimes her head gets all in a whirl. For we have five meals a day, so she has to prepare five different kinds of dinners or suppers, and if it isnt good enough they get angry. So many of the dishes are in French, and my dress has fine pleats all over as fine as knitting needles and is from Paris. Do you know how Mortensen and Brask set the table? They cant reach with their hands, so they wear white socks over their shoes and walk on the tablecloth when arranging the big candelabras and vases. I don't think Fatty Sorensen has so many bones and rags and as much rusty iron in his back



yard as we have silver for the table.

It was full moon yesterday and that is the time for ghosts to come but the white lady didn't come. I think that was mean of her. The ceiling of the kitchen is vaulted like the crypt in St. Canute's church. But now I have found out *where Mamma lived!* In the *tower*. Not the one with the white lady, but one of the others. Jan says that "Her Grace" has the key to the rooms and she tidies them herself, also dusts them! I have wriggled the lock all I could, but those old-fashioned locks are not easy to break open. If only my burglar were here! Then I peeped through the keyhole. You needn't say it is low-down and contemptible to do that I know it very well, but I am longing so terribly for my own Mamma whom

I havent seen since I was one year old. There is green silk on the chairs there too and I can see a harp or something, and a looking-glass with glass flowers of all kinds of colors on the border. And an old old piano quite small and going up the wall. There are one hundred and thirty-five wax candles in the big chandelear besides all those on the walls and seven glasses at each cover. I am not allowed to climb the trees. That wouldn't hurt them any, would it? As big as they are. When the gray people die you and I will drive around with all the furniture to a new place every day. What fun that will be. And I will buy all the old horses and turn them out on the lawn in the park and they can stay there having a good time until they die.

My own Daddy:

I couldnt finish for Svendsen came to dress me for that dinner party. But it was an awful bore and I went to sleep. And afterward they were all talking in the garden hall for they did not know I was there and they spoke of the gray people addopting me, and

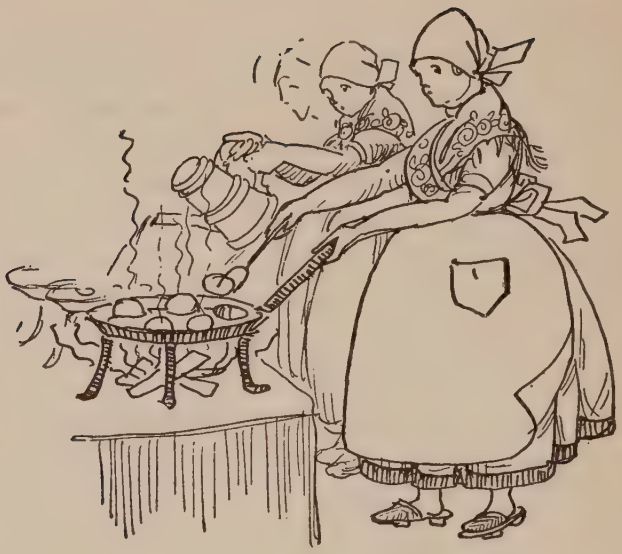
something about *her father giving her up!* I understood that very well. Giving her up! Not on your life! ! ! ! The Miss has arrived. Her upper teeth stick out like tusks. This way. And she spends all her time making signs to me with her eyes and her hands about what I should do. I am to sit as straight as a stick and hold my knife and fork differently, and shut my mouth when eating, and chew as if I had nothing at all in my mouth, and take short steps; and I must not

pull my stockings up, or scratch when I have about a million mosquito bites. But leave her to me, I'll fix her.

On Saturday is the harvest dance, I think it will be as much fun as a county fair. To-day I was allowed to ride in the grain wagons. We had pancakes and apple fritters sent out in the fields for our lunch. A whole wagon full. And we had mead to drink, it tastes the way honey smells. And coffee in great big buckets. And two of the maids got lame arms from baking, but when the doctor came they were all right again. They have also begun to cook for the harvest dance, because they have to make ten thousand apple fritters. They eat apple fritters all night at the harvest dance. Those that they make now are put in tubs with sheets spread over them. The tables are going to be spread with blue paper instead of tablecloths, and we are going to have pork roast and veal roast and soup with meat balls and flour dumplings and bread dumplings. The soup will be cooked in three big wash boilers. And when the dumplings are done they will be put into peat baskets; for where else could they put them?

All the men are going to be scrubbed with soft soap before the harvest dance, or Her Grace (you know who that is dont you?) will not dance with them, and they look forward to that during the whole year. One of the herdsmen is a pig and never washes, he weeps every year when he has to be scrubbed, for he is afraid of water, but he has it done anyway. And afterward he is immensely proud of having danced with Her Grace. We shall be illuminated too, with lanterns in the Italian poplars in the long avenue I told you about, and on the lakeshore where the little duck houses are, and in the castle way down in the kitchen windows, and way up in the embrasures. And we are going to have two big *transparencies* and supper will be served in two of the big barns and the dance will be in the very biggest. They are making the fritters in eight frying pans, each holding eleven fritters. One of the maids goes round with some kind of watering can and pours the batter out of the long spout into the pans, and another maid greases the pans by pouring melted butter into them from a smaller watering can.

(*Turn the page to find the picture.*)

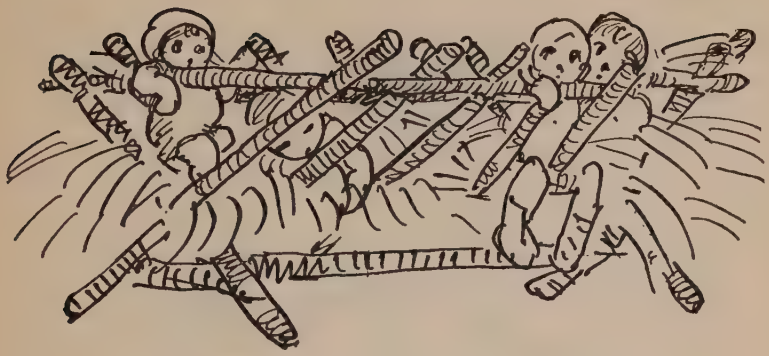


I have a yellow coat all of leather with a strap in the back, it is for tramping around in the fields. I do hope we wont get the foot and mouth disease they have it only a mile from here. I go and examine the cows under their tongues, for if there is as much as one little blister it is the foot and mouth disease, and then you must take the spit of that cow and rub the mouths of all the others with it. That is like Baker Josephsen who put all his children in one bed

when two of them had the measles, so as to have it over and done with. The veterinary says Jens stork certainly can be cured, but we are not going to put him in a plaster cast, for he might die of the fright. I think Jensine might let the magpie fly round in the rooms. Tell her I will send her a fine Christmas present if she lets him and cleans up after him. And the moss rose must remember to be watered on Mamma's grave. Your own BIBI.

Oh such fun as we had at the dance! But I forgot to tell you that for the dinner party all the counts

and baronets came driving with four horses, and I stood in my room and saw it. I began to draw a picture of it but it isnt finished. Only the very high-born may drive with four horses. And perhaps if the trunks of the trees are really too big to be pulled by two horses, then you may use four. But for the harvest dance most of the people came walking. And the heaps of children they had! They looked as if they were all going to church, each with a white handkerchief in his hand. There were beets and salt and mustard on the tables and some great big wooden mugs with beer, and the bottles with brandy were passed round. The men made bets about who could eat the most meat balls and apple fritters and someone named Morten won the bet, but he was taken ill, but he didnt burst for I asked the doctor about it so I know. The gray people and I ate by ourselves, or the others would have been afraid to eat. The barns were decorated with garlands of dahlias and red and white roses of tissue paper but the dahlias were real they were from our garden. Everybody had three helpings of soup and many slices of roast. I was allowed to stand in the door and look at them. And fancy, the little children were put to bed in the



mangers! But there were no horses or cows near or they might have eaten them by mistake. Some of the children were put under the benches while the dance was going on. There were so many violins and accordions and clarinets that my ears felt as they do when I dive and get them full of water. The housekeeper fainted she was so tired of cooking. Whenever they had danced a little while they started all over again to eat apple fritters and cookies and drink coffee punch. The foreman made a speech for Her Grace and the manager for the Count. But do you know who made a speech for me??? The oldest herdsman! For he was tipsy. He called me the *little countess*

and *our own countess* (you know he was here when Mamma was a little girl). But I have discovered that a certain window is generally left open. So some day I am going to climb up to my own Mamma. You wait and see. Your own BIBI.

Daddy that Miss makes me wild. But it is no use for me to tell her what I think of her in Danish for she understands nothing but English and I cant say any bad words in English. I can a little in French but she doesnt understand that either. I must not peel my egg, that isnt nice. I must not mash my potatoes in the gravy. I must not bite my bread. What have I teeth for, I should like to know? Yesterday the window wasnt open. But as soon as it is what do you think I will do? For there is a little boat near by and I am going to row over to the wall. There are some iron hooks sticking in the wall, I suppose from former times. I can easily climb that wall the stones are much bigger and rougher than most other places.

If I cant see my mamma's room *I am going to run away*. Dont be frightened if some night I throw a stone against your window, for it will be only I. But I cant see to climb the wall at night, and during the day there are always people around. So I am going to try when the gray people are having their afternoon nap and the Miss is resting in the hammock and wearing her blue glasses for the sun.

My own Daddy you cant I it goes round I am so glad so glad but I am all right If only Simson hadnt I wouldnt have fallen down but Daddy

It sings in my head and feels so queer Mamma is hanging on all the walls

My own Daddy:

I have stuck the paper under the blanket for they would take it away from me. But I *will* write you for —do you know where I am????? In Mamma's room. *Mamma's own room.* My own Mamma's own room. Goodbye Daddy, Goodbye.

I have promised to be very quiet. But it was that dumb boat that hit me—although it really couldnt help it. I am so sleepy. . . .

My own Daddy:

It was because Simson called the gray people. And they began to cry Good Heavens! Good Heavens! That made me so confused that I let go. But I was almost up to the window. Then I dropped down but I didnt get hurt. *Not a bit.* Dont think that for a

minute. The docter said if only I would lie absolutely quiet it would be all right. The wound isnt a bit dangerous. But he had to wash it out with something that burns to clean it so that it wont be infected. If it is all right he is going to sew it together. I didnt know at all where I was. For I had fainted—Daddy think! Really *fainted!* But when I came to I was in bed and the gray lady was holding my hand and the tears ran down her cheeks for she thought I was going to die. Then I told them about my big trick and if they had not cried out I would not have fallen. But I am not allowed to speak either for I have fever, but I really haven't any fever I am only so hot that I perspire all over and throw off my bedding but they wont let me do that either. But one eye pulls and feels so funny. But then I said if they wouldnt let me see my mamma's room I would tear off the bandage and die. And do you know? Then I seemed to sway and rock, and I dident know what it was, but that was when they carried me upstairs into the tower. And now I am lying in my mamma's own room and in her own bed that looks like a gilt shell with white curtains around it. And everything here is mine, every bit in the drawers and all the dolls and mamma's diaries.

IN MY MAMMA'S OWN BED

But I am not going to have the keys until I am big. Now it is all sealed except the dolls. The gray lady sealed it and she is *my own grandmother*. Now I have to stop for my hand tingles.

DADDY—do you know how long I was *unconscious?* First I wasnt but then I was. *Ten days!* For it was *concussion of the brain*. But I am certainly glad I fell down. If not I might never have lived in Mamma's room, see?

But when I know it all by heart I rather think I shall go back to my own daddy. I do think so—or do you think I had better stay here and become my own manager? I would like best of all to be a veterinary for there are so many animals here that he would have plenty to do. Even if they are not sick the cows are going to have calves, or the horses colts, or the sows pigs.

But I am *not* going to be addopted. For then maybe you cant run away.

Your own BIBI.